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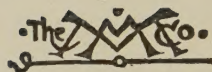
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Jesus the man and Christ the spirit / by



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**JESUS THE MAN
AND
CHRIST THE SPIRIT**



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JESUS THE MAN AND CHRIST THE SPIRIT

BY

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Testament Vindicated," "The Servant of
Jehovah," "At Onement; or Recon-
ciliation with God," etc.

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TO
MY LOYAL STUDENTS
AND
MY FAITHFUL FRIENDS
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED
AS A TOKEN OF
AFFECTION AND APPRECIATION

PREFACE

This volume contains a new inductive study of the person and work of Jesus from the standpoint of modern Biblical criticism. It is a modest attempt to clarify the subject by distinguishing what Jesus was and did as a man from what he is and does as a spirit, and by indicating the relative importance of each aspect of his life and work.

Every feature of the subject is a matter of keen interest at present, and has been for a good while; but respecting several features very different views are held by Christian scholars. Believing that views, however divergent, may be harmonized, I have endeavored to show how it can be done. We must first make the distinction I have mentioned between Jesus the man and Christ the spirit, and then apply consistently sound principles of interpretation to all the passages to be explained.

Hitherto the subject has generally been treated from the point of view of the creeds by those who were influenced by preconceptions created by them. Those ancient symbols, however, are far removed in form from the simple teaching of the Gospels and Epistles, having been made by men who theorized rather than interpreted the Scriptures. Owing to preconceptions thus created in the minds of most

expositors, the true import of many passages has been seriously obscured. But for such theorizing those symbols would never have been formulated.

Their import has also been obscured by traditional interpreters who adopted arbitrary methods of interpretation. All competent scholars of to-day admit that any writing, whether sacred or secular, has only one meaning, and that is the meaning which was in the mind of the writer, and which he intended his readers to take. Hence I have tried, regardless of creeds or articles of religion, to portray the character and describe the activity of Jesus in harmony with what the Biblical writers thought and taught concerning him.

I take for granted that the time is ripe for setting forth the facts of the Bible free from creedal suppositions and dogmatic assumptions; for, as the Anglican article respecting the sufficiency of the Scriptures says, "Whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith." That item of belief implies that the Scriptures must interpret the articles, and not the articles the Scriptures.

Applying the principles of historical exegesis in the light of textual revision and linguistic research, I have shown that certain terms have not the significance and certain ideas have not the content they were once supposed to possess; and that, properly interpreted, many passages have not the meaning they were long believed to have. That is the

case with respect to some that refer to the activity of Jesus himself, and to some that refer to the activity of his spirit.

Textual revision has helped considerably, but linguistic research has helped me more. In the latter respect two Apocryphal writings, the book of Wisdom and the book of Ecclesiasticus, have been of particular service. These two books have an importance that can scarcely be overestimated, because they, together with the book of Proverbs, help us to determine the significance of terms and the content of ideas that occur in several parts of the New Testament.

With the aid of these three books I have been enabled to explain scripturally a number of doctrines which have been disputed for centuries, and concerning which there is still much difference of opinion. Historical exegesis makes it possible to prove that the accounts of the virgin birth of Jesus are traditional, that his oneness with the Father was ethical, that his resurrection from the dead was spiritual, that his state of pre-existence was impersonal, and that his place in the Trinity is experimental.

Besides showing the nature of these doctrines, this discussion demonstrates that the theology of the New Testament, like that of the Old, is theocentric in that God is viewed by all the writers as the author of everything good. He is not only the one through whom all things arise and by whom all things are accomplished, but also the one with

whom we all have to do, or to whom we must all give account. It was he who raised up Jesus, who anointed him to be his prophet, who inclined men to become his followers, and who qualified them to teach and preach in his name. But in the *Epistles* and the book of *Acts* the theology is Christocentric in matters relating to experience, in that God is there viewed as reconciling men to himself, as forgiving them their sins, as keeping them from evil, and as saving them from condemnation, in Christ.

The discussion demonstrates, too, that the doctrine of the Trinity found in the Pauline benediction and the baptismal formula is *not* a trinity of persons; but that in the benediction it is a trinity of petitions for things to be realized in experience, and in the formula a trinity of attributes, or qualities to be expressed in character and conduct. The threefold name in Matthew represents three essential attributes in God, who is described as the Father who sent the Son and gives the Spirit. He is the one who does everything that pertains to the salvation of men.

This work is the outcome of a lifetime of study and reflection; and, though corrective in many respects, it is constructive in every respect. Early in my ministry I discovered that certain things I had been taught about religion were only partly true, and that certain theories of doctrine were positively false. So I began at once to correct misconceptions and restate doctrines for myself, and I have

been doing that with theological students and religious people for nearly half a century.

Seventeen years ago this fall I commenced to write on this subject, but was compelled to lay the manuscript aside because of other duties. For the past five years, however, I have devoted the time almost exclusively to a fresh investigation of it, and to the preparation and publication of this volume. The labor, though exacting, has been a steady source of delight, as the work was so interesting that it proved a constant stimulus to exertion.

The conclusions I have reached are the result of an independent examination of the books of the Bible, and they are as evangelical as they are critical. I have quoted very seldom, and then only from recognized Christian scholars who substantiated some statement or confirmed some opinion; and I have ventured no opinion that is not suggested by Scripture and supported by scholarship. Should some conclusions appear novel or strange, I must ask the reader to weigh the evidence carefully and with an open mind, for to cling to erroneous views in the face of established facts is stultifying to oneself and dishonoring to God.

In no part of the discussion have I been influenced either by Arianism or by Unitarianism, nor have I ever had the slightest sympathy with the one or the other as an "ism." I have been governed solely by a single purpose, and that is to ascertain the historic meaning of each passage, and to express it as clearly and concisely as I could. Hence, as far

as possible, I have compressed the matter into the smallest compass compatible with lucidity and thoroughness.

To interpret our Founder in terms of his own teaching as contained in the Gospels is the only way to form an adequate appreciation of his supreme excellence, and no one who is fair to the Evangelic records can dim the luster of his character as there portrayed, or impair the value of what he is there reported to have taught, for his precepts are of universal significance and his principles of perpetual application.

The book was written with a devout desire to elucidate the truth as it is in Jesus, and is offered to the public as a humble contribution to the better understanding of both him and his doctrine. It is issued in the hope that it may not only serve to give the Church a truer appreciation of his person and work, but also help to hasten the time when the religion of dogma will give way to the religion of life, and the Christ of experience will take the place of the Christ of creed. *Good*

G. C. WORKMAN

Toronto, September, 1928

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JESUS THE MAN
AND
CHRIST THE SPIRIT

JESUS THE MAN AND CHRIST THE SPIRIT

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

During the last two decades, Biblical scholars have been debating the question, Jesus or Christ? some taking the one side and some the other; and by certain scholars we are bidden, or have been urged, to choose between the Jesus of history and the Christ of dogma.

But no such alternative exists in the New Testament, and, therefore, no such choice has to be made. The Evangelists and Apostles speak of both Jesus and Christ, that is, of Jesus the man and of Christ the spirit; and all who study the Gospels and Epistles should do the same. The Evangelists, however, were not always consistent in their manner of reporting, for sometimes they represent Jesus as uttering language that was inspired by the Spirit. That is to say, they have put words into his mouth that cannot have passed over his lips.

For instance, the sayings attributed to him after the crucifixion, such as that recorded at the end of Matthew's Gospel—"Go ye therefore, and make

disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit;¹ teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the consummation of the age"²—cannot have proceeded from Jesus himself. But how can we tell? someone may ask.

We can tell that those words did not proceed from him, first, *because* the post-crucifixion appearances were spiritual, not physical, manifestations; secondly, because he did not call himself the Son of God, nor command the Apostles to baptize in his name; and, thirdly, because the expression, "Father, Son, and holy Spirit," belongs to a time considerably later than his death, when his spirit was unified with the divine Spirit. It appears to have originated with Paul, as the benediction at the end of his second Epistle to the Corinthians suggests.

That the benediction is earlier than the baptismal formula is certain, because the formula was manifestly developed from the benediction; and that the formula belongs to a somewhat late date is probable from the fact that we find several references in the book of Acts to baptism *in* or *into* the name of Christ, as in chapters 2:38, 10:48, 19:5, but no reference whatever to baptism into the threefold name. That could not have been the case if the command to baptize into that name had been given to the Apostles by Jesus himself. Furthermore, we

¹ This is the form that should always be used in English.

² So the original is correctly translated in the margin of the Revised Version.

know that the formula must be quite late for the additional reason that the short form of the commission, found in Mark 16:15, occurs in the appendix to that Gospel, which is wanting in the two oldest Greek manuscripts.

Because the post-crucifixion appearances were spiritual manifestations we know that the sayings of Jesus recorded in the last chapter of Luke's Gospel also cannot have been spoken by him personally. We know, too, that the promise contained in Matthew 18:20—"Where two or three are gathered together in my name (literally, unto or toward my name),³ there am I in the midst of them"—cannot have been uttered by him for the reason that his spiritual presence is meant; and the thought of him being spiritually present with his followers represents a period later than the crucifixion.

Both the idea of meeting with respect to his name and the idea of him being spiritually present with his people are akin to those found in the Fourth Gospel, which is admittedly of late date. In that Gospel, which cannot be earlier than the first part of the second century, he is represented in chapter 14:18 as saying to the Disciples, "I come (or, more literally, I am coming) unto you"; and the context shows that the coming is a coming in spirit, or a coming of his spirit. It was a spiritual reunion with them through the Paraclete that is meant, and it was not till after he was gone that they conceived of him as coming in that way. It was the experience

³The preposition signifies to or toward, and suggests the idea of confessing or honoring him.

of his spirit that gave them the assurance of his presence with them.

Another saying, found in Matthew 11:27 and Luke 10:22, seems clearly to belong to the same post-crucifixion period. In Matthew it reads, "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any man know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him." These are the only two places in the Synoptic Gospels where the antithesis "the Son" and "the Father" occurs in that way, but it is quite characteristic of the Fourth Gospel. The contrast expressed is not between Jesus and God, but between his spirit and the divine Spirit, and is peculiar to the time subsequent to his departure, when the two spirits were unified. It is Christ the spirit to whom all things are said to be delivered by the Father, just as it is Christ the spirit to whom all authority is said to be given in chapter 28:18. As Meyer remarks on the latter passage, this authority was practically given when the Father awoke him out of death, or raised him from the dead, as that great scholar meant.)

Then, again, such passages as Matthew 16:27, Mark 8:38, and Luke 9:26, which speak of the Son of man "coming in the glory of the Father," and Matthew 26:64, Mark 14:62, and Luke 21:27, which speak of him "coming in the clouds of heaven," were not uttered by the man of Nazareth, because they refer not to the historical Jesus, but to the risen Christ. It was the spirit of Jesus that was

expected by the Evangelists and Apostles to return in the glory of the Father. The title Son of man was borrowed from the book of Enoch, where it first occurs in connection with such language. In that apocryphal writing the title is often used of a heavenly spirit just as it was used of Jesus after he became a spirit.

From the foregoing examples we may see that there is an explanatory or interpretative element in the Synoptic Gospels which was added to his teaching after Jesus died. This interpretative element was neither forged nor fabricated, but was inserted because it expressed what the Evangelists believed represented the thought of Jesus, or the mind of God. When we come to the Fourth Gospel, we find a much larger element of that kind. The Gospel according to John is neither a history nor a biography, but rather an interpretation. Most, if not all, of it was composed after Jesus went away; and most of the subject matter is so idealized and philosophized that, if he spoke as the first three Evangelists report him as speaking, he cannot have spoken as the Fourth Evangelist makes him speak, because he did not think in his forms nor teach in his terms.

John's Gospel, as it is called, though we are not sure who wrote it, is a dramatized presentation of the life and teaching of Jesus. It consists of a series of dialectic discourses in which the author speaks and in which Jesus is made to speak. A few examples will suffice to show how he was made to speak. Matthew 5:14 reports him as saying to the Disci-

ples, "Ye are the light of the world"; but John 8:12 represents him as saying, "I am the light of the world." Since he cannot have spoken in both of these ways, and, as a prophet, would not have spoken in the latter way, it is necessary to explain more fully why he was so made to speak.

This Gospel was prepared, we are told, not to report what Jesus said, but to prove who he was or what he is. In chapter 20:31, which once formed the conclusion of the work, the author says, "These (things) are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name." Hence the writer had a dogmatic rather than a historic purpose. Composed nearly a century after Jesus was crucified and written chiefly with reference to his spirit, this Gospel records what the author saw him to have been and what he found his spirit to be. He saw him to have been the light of the world and the spiritual Messiah of God, and found his spirit to be both light and life to all who believe. Those who follow him do not walk in darkness, but have the light of life, to paraphrase his words.

He not only did not style himself the light of the world, but also did not call himself Jesus Christ, as he is made to do in chapter 17:3. That is an expression which was not used of him during the days of his flesh. When he was on the earth, the term Christ was employed as an adjective with the definite article, and meant the Christ or the Anointed One. It was not used by the Apostles as a proper

noun till some time after the crucifixion. That he should anticipate the use of Jesus Christ as a proper name seems not only very improbable, as Dr. Plummer admits, but utterly impossible, as the expression had not then been coined.

One more good example of the unhistoric character of this Gospel occurs in chapter 1:29, where John the Baptist is represented as saying at his first interview with Jesus, "Behold, the Lamb of God, which beareth⁴ the sin of the world." These words are put into the mouth of the Baptist that express a developed doctrine of the death of Christ, which proves that the forerunner of Jesus could not have uttered them, because there is no reason to believe that he was viewed as a sin-bearer at the beginning of his public career. All through his ministry he was regarded as a prophet, and it was only after his departure that his followers came to see what he was in relation to God and what he does in behalf of mankind.

Owing to the interpretative element in the Gospels, therefore, we should always distinguish between what Jesus said and what he is made to say, for the difference is very significant. We should also distinguish between what he did as a man and what he does as a spirit, for that is another very significant difference. Heretofore these differences have not been considered as carefully as they should have been. On the contrary, they have been largely overlooked.

⁴This is the correct rendering, as the original means bearing the consequences of sin.

Hitherto theologians, for the most part, have spoken indiscriminately of Jesus and Christ, that is, as if they were interchangeable terms. Christians in general, indeed, have failed to distinguish consistently between the man of Nazareth and the spirit he bequeathed to the world. Failing to discriminate as they should, they have commonly thought of him as doing personally things that were done by him, not as a person, but as a spirit.

That way of thinking, however, is misleading and incorrect. It not only creates misconception and confusion, but also keeps us from obtaining a proper understanding of the author of our religion. We shall never understand him rightly till we distinguish what he did as a man or a person from what he does as a spirit. Because the difference is most important it must be clearly shown.

A person walks, a spirit works; a person speaks, a spirit operates; a person is an entity, but a spirit is an energy. As a person, Jesus instructed his followers; as a spirit, he energizes them. As a person, he stimulated their minds; as a spirit, he quickens their hearts. As a person, he impressed all who listened to him; as a spirit, he possesses all who will receive him.

For those who have not thought much about the subject it may be stated that to be a person is to have a body and to be capable of moral choice, whereas to be a spirit is to exist without a body and without the power of choice. Personality in man implies corporeity, but in God it does not, because

he is an infinite and eternal Being without form or parts. But, though he is not a person in the sense of having a body, he has the fundamental attributes of personality—life, intelligence, and volition, or the power of willing in an infinite degree.

Hence he is infinitely more a person than is any one of us, because the personality of every human being comes from him. That is to say, he is the author of all finite intelligences and the father of all spirits, or “the God of the spirits of all flesh,” as Numbers 16:22 describes him. But, as he has neither form nor parts because he is a spirit, so, when we become spirits, we shall have neither form nor parts. In I Corinthians 15:44 the Apostle says, “There is a spiritual body.” Just what Paul meant there we can not tell; but by the spiritual body he may have meant the real character or the true self as known only to God, because in the Scriptures immortality is viewed as the persistence of the self.

Paul himself makes this distinction between a person and a spirit in the very next verse, where he draws a contrast between them. “The first man Adam became a living soul; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit,” he says. Here the first man is viewed as a person with a physical body, but the second is viewed as a spirit without a body. It is as a spirit, not as a person, that Jesus quickens men from death to life.

Another example occurs in Galatians 2:20, where the Apostle says, “I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me.” The reader will notice that

he does not say Jesus lives in me, but Christ, the spirit, lives in me. That is what he meant, too, when he wrote to those addressed in II Corinthians 13:5, "Jesus Christ is in you, unless ye be reprobate." One person does not dwell in another, but the spirit of one may dwell in another and dominate him. By virtue of its indwelling, the spirit of Jesus, through the agency of the divine Spirit, guides the life and governs the conduct of his disciples.

Let it be noted in this connection that Christ lives in true believers not merely as an influence, but as an energy, that is, as a vivifying or vitalizing force. To quote the words of Webster and Wilkinson, "His vivifying action takes effect through his incorporation with humanity."⁵ That statement is substantiated by II Corinthians 12:2, where Paul describes himself as "A man in Christ," that is, one in union with the spirit of Jesus as his life-element. The phrase affords an excellent definition of a Christian.

All through his Epistles Paul distinguishes between what Jesus did as a person and what he does as a spirit. In I Thessalonians 4:16 he says, "The dead in Christ shall rise first"; in Romans 12:5 he says, "We, who are many, are one body in Christ"; in Ephesians 1:3 he says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ." In each passage he refers to those who are in union with the spirit of Jesus as their life-element.

⁵ Comment on I Corinthians 15:45.

There may seem to be an exception in I Thessalonians 4:14, where he says, "Them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him." But that verse is not at variance with the Apostle's rule. The words "in Jesus" should be translated through Jesus, and that translation is given in the margin of the New Revision. Paul here refers to Jesus as risen from the dead, and the preposition expresses relation to his spirit, not to his person, as the phrase "in Christ" in verse 16 proves.

While the Evangelists sometimes represent Jesus as saying what was prompted by the Spirit, because they were interpreting rather than reporting, the Apostles always observed the distinction that was made by Paul, and it should always be made by us. In Hebrews 9:14 the author assures his readers that the blood of Christ cleanses the conscience from dead works to serve the living God. According to Leviticus 17:11, the blood of an offered victim stands for the life. Hence the blood of Christ here represents the spiritual, not the literal, life of Jesus; and the idea of the writer is that the life-giving spirit of Jesus coming into a man purifies his nature and frees him from a sense of sin.

In like manner, the author of I John 1:7 declares that, if we walk in the light as God is in the light, "we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Here, again, the blood of Jesus represents the spiritual life of Jesus, and the meaning is that the cleansing is effected by his life coming into us and his spirit

taking possession of us. In every case the indwelling of his spirit is conceived as that which brings about the change.

Similarly, I Peter 3:16 speaks of those who have a "good manner of life in Christ"; II Timothy 1:9 of those to whom divine grace was given "in Christ Jesus"; and I John 5:20 of those who are in him that is true (the true God), "even in his Son Jesus Christ." In these, as in the other passages, union with the spirit, not with the person, of Jesus is meant.

Other passages might be adduced, such as Romans 8:1, which says, "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," and verse 10, which adds, "If Christ is in you, (though) the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness"; Ephesians 3:17, which expresses the prayer that "Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith"; and Colossians 1:27, which describes the mystery of the Gospel message proclaimed to the Gentiles as "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

When speaking of the historical Jesus, as when speaking of his spirit, the Apostles sometimes use the term Christ, sometimes the expression Jesus Christ, and sometimes the combination Christ Jesus; but we can always tell from the context whether the reference is to Jesus himself or to his spirit. Take, for example, Hebrews 9:28: "Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin,

to them that wait for him, unto salvation." The first portion of the verse refers to him as a person hanging on the cross, the second refers to him as a spirit coming to effect the complete salvation of his followers.

There is a further difference between a person and a spirit to be explained, and it is of great importance in relation to this subject. A person is visible and corporeal, but a spirit is invisible and incorporeal. As a person, Jesus moved about from place to place; as a spirit, he is carried and communicated. As a person, he was known to all who saw him or heard him speak; as a spirit, he is known only to those to whom it is imparted or through whom it is manifested.

The difference may be illustrated by the promise recorded in Matthew 18:20, that he would be present where two or three are met together in his name. The fulfilment of the promise is conditioned on meeting in his name, that is, in his character or with his purpose. It is only when they meet in that way that he is in the midst of them. If they meet in an unworthy way, he is not present with them any more than he is present with a company that never heard of him. They must meet as his representatives, if they would realize his spiritual presence with them.

The account in John 14:22, 23 furnishes another illustration of the difference. When Judas is said to have inquired how he would manifest himself to his Disciples, and not to the world, Jesus is made

to answer, "If a man love me, he will keep my word; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." In this as in the previous passage, the manifestation is conditioned; and the condition is the same in each case, namely, love and obedience. We must love him and keep his word in order that the spirit of Jesus may come to us and abide with us.

The coming of his spirit is owing to the operation of the divine Spirit, which brings home to the hearts of believers the truth as it is in Jesus. While he was on the earth, he was localized and confined to one place at a time, and for that reason the Gospel spread rather slowly at first; but, as soon as he became a life-giving spirit, it spread more rapidly, because his followers took his spirit wherever they went, and diffused it among those with whom they came in contact. And its diffusion has been gradual and continuous ever since.

While in the flesh, Jesus inspired his followers by his personal presence; but, since his departure, he has inspired them by his spiritual presence, which, like the spread of the Gospel, is a progressive manifestation. His spirit goes where the Gospel goes, or where it is carried by devout disciples; and it has already been carried far and wide to the nations of the earth.

Everyone who has it takes it with him, and, according to his personal consecration and capacity, communicates it to those about him. But after nearly nineteen centuries he is still unknown to

millions of men and women, and multitudes will be without a knowledge of him for a long time to come. He will remain unknown to very many till his Gospel has been preached or his truth proclaimed throughout the entire world.

What has just been said should prepare the reader for the statement of a fact which very many have failed to notice. The divine Spirit is omnipresent, because it is infinite; but the spirit of Jesus is not, because he was finite. Hence it is right to speak of the ubiquity or "everywhereness" of God, but it is wrong to use that term of the spirit of Jesus. We should speak rather of the ubiety or "whereness" of his spirit, because it goes only where he manifests himself or where his spirit is received into the heart.

That fact should be carefully noted and constantly borne in mind, for it was by becoming a life-giving spirit that he could become the universal Christ. Though multitudes are still without a knowledge of him, he is getting to be more widely known each year; and those who regard him as the spiritual Christ of God believe that he will eventually be made known to all mankind. They believe also that his spirit is now universal in the sense of being suited to all classes and conditions of men.

Furthermore, it was by becoming a life-giving spirit that Jesus became the Christ of experience. Hence we must make the distinction the Apostles made in order to discriminate what he was and did as a person from what he is and does as a spirit.

Unless we so discriminate, we shall perpetuate misconception. The present writer has long found it necessary to explain hymns addressed to Jesus, as well as passages of Scripture ascribed to him.

For all these reasons he sees the need of a new critical discussion, in accordance with the method indicated, of the Jesus of history and the Christ of experience. In no other way can we apprehend the actual Jesus or appreciate the relative importance of his person and work. In no other way either can the true relation between the work of his person and the work of his spirit be rightly understood. It is the only way, for instance, to understand the difference between the affirmation in Luke 22:27, "I am in the midst of you as he that serveth," and the promise in Matthew 28:20, "I am with you always, even unto the consummation of the age."

By the Jesus of history is meant the prophet of Nazareth, who went about Palestine nineteen centuries ago preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, as he appeared to the men and women of his day, especially to those who knew him intimately and associated with him closely. It is particularly necessary to study him historically, because so many have treated him dogmatically that his true character has become obscured. Most theologians, assuming the origin of his nature and the composition of his personality to be different from ours, have explained him in such a way that he has little significance for those who lead life under what has been called "the common condition of humanity."

By the Christ of experience is meant the spirit of Jesus of which we become possessed when, through our interest in him and our union with God in him, we are enabled each one to say with the Apostle in Galatians 2:20, "I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me." In other words, it is the spirit we receive when we become like-minded with Jesus, so that we manifest his disposition, acting as he acted and thinking as he thought. Christ lives in the hearts of his followers when, through studying the teaching and practising the precepts of Jesus, their whole personality is so dominated by his way of thinking and acting that they are led to imitate his example, to exhibit his temper, and to walk in his steps.

Our knowledge of the character of Jesus is to be gained from the first three Gospels, because the records they contain are largely historical; but the Scriptural view of the work of his spirit is to be gathered from the Fourth Gospel, the book of Acts, and the Pauline Epistles, because their authors were interested, for the most part, in the activity of his spirit, and dealt chiefly with the nature and power of his spirit.

In conclusion, the reader should be told that this discussion is not concerned with creeds, confessions of faith, or articles of religion, but simply with the teaching of the Biblical writers. The creeds are only symbols, or formal statements of doctrine representing the beliefs of those who made them. They were merely the attempts of men to translate

the teaching of the New Testament into the thought of their time. Inasmuch as they were made long after the Evangelists and Apostles had passed away, those writers never heard of them. No one of them ever dreamed of the Christ of dogma.

Not merely do the creeds represent the thought of their time, but they represent that thought expressed in terms of philosophy. That is to say, they present the metaphysical interpretation which the creed-makers gave of the person and work of Jesus, a form of teaching of which the Biblical writers knew nothing. They expressed what they wrote practically, not metaphysically, and interpreted every essential doctrine in terms of experience. Even the doctrine of the Trinity is expressed in that way.

In his *Philosophy of the Christian Religion* Principal Fairbairn asserts that "without the metaphysical conception of Christ the Christian religion would long ago have ceased to live."¹ But to the present writer that is an amazing assertion with which he is in total disagreement. It is Christianity as a life, and not as a creed, that has transformed character and regenerated society wherever the Gospel has gone.

Knowing nothing of a metaphysical Christ or of a metaphysical God, in the technical sense of the word metaphysics, all the Biblical writers spoke of a God whom they experienced, and the New Testament writers wrote of a Jesus whom they knew or

¹P. 4.

of a Christ that dwelt in their hearts. The God whom they experienced was also a Being whom they knew by his divine indwelling, for he was One whose wisdom they saw, whose goodness they felt, whose presence and power they realized, and whose favor and fellowship they enjoyed.

CHAPTER II

THE NATIVITY

According to the First and Third Gospels, Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea, but the two accounts are different and contradictory. The one in Matthew assumes that Joseph and Mary lived in Bethlehem before they went to live in Nazareth, and gives the impression that they moved there through fear of Archelaus, whereas the one in Luke suggests that they dwelt at Nazareth prior to their journey to Bethlehem to be enrolled in the census of Augustus.

But Mark and John say nothing about the birth of Jesus, and an old tradition connects it with Nazareth. For these two reasons many have supposed that Nazareth was his native town. Some scholars have thought that Matthew and Luke believed Bethlehem to have been his birthplace, partly because it was the original home of King David, and partly because it was designated by Micah as the city from which an ideal ruler would eventually come.

The latter fact has no significance, however, for the reason that the prophecy has no reference to Jesus. He was not the sort of ruler the prophet

expected to appear. His prophecy foreshadowed a literal, temporal ruler, and Jesus was not a temporal, but a spiritual, prince. The place of his birth is uncertain and must remain so.

Not only the place, but also the time, of his birth is uncertain. We do not know the exact year nor the exact day of the year. The date commonly assigned was fixed in the sixth century by the Abbot Dionysius Exiguus, who reckoned that the birth occurred in the year of Rome 754, which corresponds to the first year of our era. But careful examination of the data proves that his reckoning was wrong.

Matthew 2:1 states that Jesus was born before the death of Herod the Great, who is believed to have died in the year of Rome 750, subsequently to a noticeable eclipse of the moon that took place in that year. If what is there stated is correct, and it seems to be confirmed by Luke 3:23, which says that Jesus was nearly thirty years old at the time when he commenced his public ministry, then the statement in Matthew 2:16, that Herod slew all the male children in and about Bethlehem "from two years old and under," suggests that the received chronology is, at least, about five years too late.

And most modern scholars believe that the season of the year has also been wrongly fixed. Luke 2:8 says that shepherds of the country were tending their flocks in the fields on the day that Jesus was born. As it was customary for them to tent from about the vernal to the autumnal equinox, that fact is sufficient to show that the event must have hap-

pened somewhere between those two periods. Hence his birth appears to have taken place at Nazareth in the year of Rome 748, and sometime during the spring or the summer of the year.

Because he is believed by many to have had a supernatural conception, we must next investigate the story of the virgin birth of Jesus. But for two short paragraphs—the one in Matthew and the other in Luke—each of which states that he was conceived by the holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary while she was espoused to Joseph, it would not be necessary to take account of that belief, nor to give it any serious thought.

Before we examine these two paragraphs, Matthew 1:18-25 and Luke 1:26-38, which interrupt the course of the narrative in each case, let us look at the passages which affirm that his birth was according to the ordinary law of human descent. Of such passages there are several, and they are all equally significant, though their importance has too generally been underestimated.

Mark and John say nothing about his birth, it has been observed. But John 1:45 represents Philip as saying to Nathanael, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." This declaration is explicit and unqualified, and is recorded without any reservation. As Philip was an intimate companion of Jesus, and apparently belonged to the first company of his Apostles, it should be taken as authoritative.

In chapter 6:42, also, certain Jews, described as murmuring at some things they did not understand, are made to ask, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?" This passage is just as explicit and unqualified as the other, and both passages assume actual knowledge on the part of the speakers. Some have suggested that they express the current belief of the time, but there is no warrant for such a suggestion, because each of them represents the positive conviction of both Philip and the Fourth Evangelist, neither of whom knew anything miraculous or mysterious about the parentage of Jesus.

Then Matthew and Luke both trace the lineage of Jesus through Joseph, though the genealogies agree only in the portion from Abraham to David. Matthew 1:16 says that "Jacob (the son of Matthan) begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." This verse shows that he believed Joseph to have been the father of Jesus as truly as John believed him to have been, otherwise he would not have traced the descent as he did. His manifest purpose was to establish the blood relationship of Jesus to David, and to David through Joseph.¹

It is an interesting fact, and one not sufficiently stressed, that in the Nicene Creed, which is the first of the three great Christian creeds, and was com-

¹ The suggestion that Matthew may have given the legal rather than the natural pedigree of Joseph and Jesus does not seem worthy of serious consideration.

piled by a General Council of the Church to define orthodoxy on the part of its leaders and teachers, the doctrine of the virgin birth does not appear. That fact is as significant as it is interesting, and it should be considered carefully by all students of history.

In like manner, Luke 3:23 says that Jesus began to teach when he was about thirty years of age, "being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph." Though the words, as was supposed, are parenthetical, the supposition was a natural one, the correctness of which we have no reason thus far to dispute. The supposition, moreover, was not simply a natural one, but one that harmonizes with what Matthew and John expressly state, and also with what Luke 2:48 represents Mary as saying to Jesus, when she found him in the Temple talking with the Jewish teachers: "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I sought thee sorrowing." Only Mary knew who was his father, and she must have stated what she knew was true.

Furthermore, in chapter 13:55, 56, Matthew reports a group of people who had listened with astonishment to the wisdom of Jesus as saying, "Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us?" The assumption here is the same as in John 6:42, and the language expresses a positive belief on the part of those who spoke. All these

sons and daughters were regarded as full brothers and sisters of Jesus.

Had we only the Second and Fourth Gospels, we should have no doubt about the birth of Jesus; and but for the parenthesis in Luke 3:23, if we had only the passages thus far examined, we should have no reason to question its naturalness. We should believe his paternity to have been as natural as his maternity was. Before we conclude this paragraph let it be repeated for the sake of emphasis that, while the genealogy given by Matthew and that given by Luke differ considerably, both trace the descent of Jesus through Joseph as his natural father.

Coming to the passages that record something extraordinary about the birth, that in Matthew 1:18-25 and that in Luke 1:26-38, we find two versions of a story which not only interrupts the course of the narrative in each case, but also appears in quite divergent forms. The divergencies are numerous, and show that the accounts were derived from different sources. Comparing them carefully, we shall see that the account in Luke is longer, fuller, more pictorial, and more detailed.

According to Matthew, the conception of Jesus was made known to Joseph in a dream; according to Luke, it was communicated to Mary by an angel. Matthew says that he was supernaturally conceived in fulfilment of the prophecy in Isaiah 7:14—"A virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel"—while Luke says that he was

supernaturally conceived in fulfilment of a divine purpose, namely, that he might inherit the throne of David, and reign forever over the house of Jacob.

Both of these versions have a suspicious appearance, and both are manifestly traditional rather than historical in character. Meyer says that they bear the marks of legend on the very face.² Criticism of the sources shows that they belong to later strata of the Evangelic records. But that in Luke is the more imaginative of the two. The conversation with the angel contained in verses 34-38 is without a parallel in the New Testament.

Those verses are marked by the well-known fondness of Luke, shown also in the book of Acts, for making use of angels in his narratives; and they appear to have been added after the previous part of his version had been prepared. They represent a pictorial form of writing which he employs more frequently than any other Evangelist, and one which should never be literally interpreted.

Now which account of the birth of Jesus are we to accept? Should we believe the passages that declare Joseph to have been his father or the paragraphs that describe him as having had no human father? The positive passages quoted refer to the nativity as normal and natural, but the paragraphs in question refer to it as abnormal and unnatural; and it is a sound principle of interpretation that of two accounts, the one of which is extraordinary and the other of which is according to the common

² Commentary on Matthew, pp. 56-70.

order, the latter is the more probable or the more likely to be correct. It is both Scriptural and rational to believe what the genealogical tables record, and what the latest and richest Gospel represents Philip as declaring, namely, that Jesus of Nazareth was the son of Joseph.

His declaration cannot be set aside or rendered null by either version of the virgin story. The reason given by Matthew for the supernatural conception of Jesus has no significance, and is not suggested by Isaiah 7:14. That verse does not refer to the Messiah, nor does the word there translated "virgin" always mean an unmarried woman. It means rather a young woman of nubile age, whether married or unmarried; and in the prophecy it denotes a married woman. The Jews did not expect a Messiah who would be born of a virgin, nor did the prophet intimate anything miraculous about the birth of the child he had in mind.

The sign of a woman who would soon give birth to a child whom she would call "Immanuel," which means God with us in his protecting and delivering providence, was offered by Isaiah to Ahaz to assure him of speedy deliverance from an enemy of whom he was then in dread. The prophet had no thought that his sign would be used in a different way hundreds of years afterwards.

The reason given by Luke has just as little significance as that given by Matthew. Though the passage Isaiah 9:6, 7, part of which he applies in verses

32, 33 to Jesus, is a Messianic prophecy, it speaks of a temporal Messiah, which Jesus was not, and did not claim to be. Hence it is applied to him in an accommodated sense. Then, as in Isaiah 7:14, there is no suggestion in Isaiah 9:6,7 of a supernatural conception. None of the prophets ever foreshadowed a Messiah who would be supernaturally conceived or miraculously born.

Each version of the story belongs to a late date, and was inserted in the narrative subsequently to the composition of the main portion of the book. The fact that it is not found in Mark, which contains the earliest stratum of the Gospel, proves that assertion to be correct. It is not mentioned by Mark, or Peter, or Paul; nor by James, or John, or Jude; nor by the author of Hebrews, nor by the author of Revelation. None of these writers refers to it, and none of them seems ever to have heard of it. Neither does any of the Disciples seem ever to have had an inkling of the story.

In proof that Paul knew nothing of it we have but to turn to Galatians 4:4, where he says, "When the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law," which means that the birth was by ordinary generation. The phrase "born of a woman," has this meaning wherever it occurs in the Scriptures. Then in Acts 2:30 Peter is reported as saying that God had solemnly promised David "that of the fruit of his loins he would set one (meaning Christ) upon his throne." Each of these passages proves that both

Paul and Peter believed in the natural descent of Jesus from David.

Moreover, it is certain that Jesus himself did not know of anything abnormal about the manner of his birth; neither did Joseph and his neighbors, nor did his relatives and friends. The demeanor of the Disciples, too, precludes all knowledge by them of anything so extraordinary. Then a birth so wonderful as the virgin story describes would have affected the mother as she seems not to have been affected, both in her attitude to him and in her treatment of him.

Matthew's version of the story might have been written by a Jewish Christian who had misinterpreted the Immanuel prophecy, though to the present writer that seems quite unlikely; but that by Luke could hardly have been written by one who had not been born and bred in heathendom. As Luke was a heathen physician before he became a Christian, he was familiar with the way in which primitive nations were accustomed to account for their distinguished heroes. In the last verse of the third chapter of his Gospel he speaks of Adam as "the son of God" in the physical sense, just as in Acts 17:28 he reports Paul as quoting from certain Greek authors who taught that "we are also his offspring."

For these reasons many scholars have supposed the story to be a myth, and many still hold some such view. But the present writer does not so regard it. There is nothing anywhere that is similar to it,

nor is there anything that can be compared with it as respects the use made of it. Though the story itself is quite incredible, the form in which it appears is profoundly spiritual; and it embodies reverent religious ideas. Besides, a myth is the work of imagination, and grows up without intent; whereas the virgin story is the work of reflection, and was developed with design.

Jesus was a unique being through whom God revealed his mind and will more fully than through any of his predecessors. He brought to the world a beautiful message of benevolent love, and delivered it with such authority that officers sent to apprehend him, overawed by the majesty of his words, were impelled to exclaim, John 7:46 says, that "never man so spake." His life and teaching introduced a new dispensation, a dispensation so different from anything that went before that it marked a new era in the history of mankind.

How could such a being be explained? To account for him must have been a problem to many of his followers, and one that occupied their attention till a satisfactory solution was found. His commanding personality proved him to have been superior to other men. He was so superior that he seemed to some to have been wholly different from other men. Thus he became to them a miraculous person, and the further he receded from them the more marvelous he appeared. A person so exceptional would seem to require an exceptional origin.

What was his origin? That was a question they

would naturally ask, and the virgin story was the answer given to their question. The answer was agreeable to the thinking of devout minds in that age, and it has satisfied the thought of unreflecting Christians ever since. A superhuman personality would seem to imply a superhuman parentage, and would suggest the idea of a supernatural conception.

In some such way we may assume the story to have been developed, because its development was gradual; and it was not made public till after Mark had written his Gospel and Paul had passed away. For had either that Evangelist or that Apostle known of it, he would certainly have referred to it. Neither of them could have failed to mention it. And we find other such cases of doctrinal development in later history.

Early in the fifth century the doctrine of perpetual virginity was proposed to vindicate the supreme virtue of chastity, and it affords an excellent example of the way in which certain Christian doctrines have been developed. The theory was first advanced by Jerome with the professed aim, as Dr. Schaff says, "to save the virginity of both Mary and Joseph, and to reduce their marriage relation to a merely nominal and barren connection."³ It originated in the false notion that wedded life is less pure than celibate life, whereas the marriage state is a divinely sanctioned relationship, and is just as holy as the single state.

Though this theory was rejected by the Church

³ *Christian Church*, Vol. I, p. 274.

Fathers, it was stoutly maintained by the older theologians; and the perpetual virginity of the blessed mother has always been a standard doctrine in the Roman Catholic Church. The ascetic tendency to glorify celibacy led to the belief that the brothers and sisters of Jesus were children of Joseph by a former marriage, and, therefore, only the stepsons and stepdaughters of Mary; but that belief is based on theory, and not on fact. The real truth seems to be that Jesus was the first-born son of Mary by ordinary generation, and that she subsequently bore to Joseph four other sons and several daughters.

Another Roman Catholic doctrine, the immaculate conception of Mary, originated in a similar way. This doctrine was a matter of controversy from the twelfth to the nineteenth century; but it was not accepted as a dogma till 1854, when it was officially proclaimed by Pope Pius IX. Toward the close of that year he issued a proclamation declaring that "the most blessed Virgin Mary, in the first moment of her conception, by a special grace and privilege, in virtue of the merits of Christ, was preserved immaculate from all stains of original sin." Though there was no more warrant for the declaration in regard to her than there was in regard to any other pure mother, the dogma has since been an article of faith in the Church of Rome. To suppose that Mary was an exception to all other Jewish mothers is as unreasonable as it is unscriptural.

Both the doctrine of perpetual virginity and the

dogma of immaculate conception originated with a similar aim, as well as in a similar way, the aim of the one being to save the virginity of Mary, and the aim of the other to secure her stainlessness. The Church wished to secure her stainlessness in order to safeguard the sinlessness of Jesus. Believing him to have been sinless because he was conceived of the holy Spirit, ecclesiastics saw that, having had a human mother, he might have inherited some sinful tendencies from her. So they induced the Pope to declare that Mary was miraculously preserved immaculate, or free from every taint of evil.

All these doctrines presuppose miraculous interposition, and the immaculate conception of Mary is no less wonderful than the supernatural conception of Jesus. The former, indeed, is the more marvelous of the two, because the dogma asserts that the miracle was performed in virtue of the merits of Christ. But Christ had no merits before he was born, so that they could have had no influence on her conception, and they have never had any effect on God. He acts of his own accord, and not in virtue of the merits of Christ.

Though there was nothing in Scripture to suggest it, this dogma was deliberately proclaimed to get rid of a difficulty by a Church which claims the right to develop extra-scriptural doctrines. The proclamation of the Pope, however, did not make the dogma true; and it is not simply inconceivable to most thinking men, but impossible of credence by the modern mind. But, if the dogma of immaculate

conception could be developed in the middle of the nineteenth century, much more might the doctrine of supernatural conception be developed toward the close of the first century.

The fairness of that reasoning cannot be called in question. The former was an age of advanced science or of systematized knowledge, whereas the latter was an age of immature science, when everything phenomenal was a cause of wonder, and was miraculously explained. In that age people did not understand the character of God nor his manner of working as we do. They thought that nothing was too hard for the Lord, and that all things were possible to God. They did not realize that his laws are infinite and immutable, and that he can neither alter nor suspend them, nor do anything that is contrary to them.

An imperfect view of Deity and his way of working led to the creation of the virgin story. It was developed in good faith to account for Jesus by those who thought it needful for God to depart from the ordinary course of nature in the case of a being so unique. In that age such an explanation was both simple and satisfactory. To unreflecting minds the miraculous explanation of a mystery is often more acceptable than a natural one. And the idea of supernatural conception would be easy of acceptance then, because of the ancient belief in the superhuman origin of great national heroes.

But an explanation satisfactory to that age is not satisfactory to this, partly because the virgin story

is incredible to most people, and partly because it fails to account for the uniqueness of Jesus. The Church of that day thought a supernatural conception of Jesus necessary to safeguard his sinlessness, as the Church of a later day thought an immaculate conception of Mary necessary to safeguard her stainlessness, and also to make his freedom from sin doubly secure.

The story supposes him to have been different in respect of sin from all other men, and assumes that he was sinless because he had no power to sin; the dogma supposes her to have been different in respect of taint from all other women, and assumes that she was stainless because she had no desire to do wrong. If that had been the case, however, neither of them could have developed a moral character, for morality depends on choice; and, so far as Jesus is concerned, he did not sin because he could not, but because he would not, sin. But there is nothing in reason or in Scripture to support either assumption.

Yet the story has been used by theologians to uphold their view of the person of Jesus. They have claimed that his divinity depended on it, and was guaranteed by it. But that claim is false and rests on an erroneous belief. A being born of a human mother, though supernaturally conceived, would not be sinless, much less spiritually perfect. Nothing spiritual can be proved by anything material. A physical miracle cannot explain a spiritual phenomenon. The freedom of Jesus from sin was volitional, not constitutional.

His supreme goodness depended not on the manner of his birth, but on the manner of his life. It did not lie in his body, nor merely in his mind, but in his consecrated will. That is to say, it was not owing to physical perfection nor to intellectual distinction, but to moral excellence. That excellence resulted from personal effort and from voluntary obedience to the divine will. It was exhibited in his sublime character and his commanding personality consciously and voluntarily developed. In the next chapter it is shown that the Scriptural view of his divinity is based, not on his physical, but on his spiritual, qualities.

Besides failing to explain his divinity, the virgin story fails to explain his humanity. Indeed, instead of explaining, it obscures, his humanity. To assume that he had not a human father is not merely to place him in a class by himself and make him the only one of his kind, but to separate him from the rest of mortals and put him outside the range of all other men; for, if he was not born by ordinary generation, he was not completely connected with our race and, therefore, was not fully related to us. In other words, if he was not the offspring of two human parents, then he was not a normal human being.

The virgin birth is not, and never was, a cardinal doctrine. All evangelical scholars are aware of that fact. Professor James Agar Beet, the well-known Wesleyan theologian, stated in the *Methodist Times* over twenty years ago that it is "no essential part

of Christian apologetic," for the obvious reason, of course, that nothing essential in regard to Jesus depends on it. Nothing vital with respect to his person or work is affected in the slightest degree by believing his birth to have been according to the divine law of human generation.

We have seen that the divineness of his nature and the excellence of his character do not depend on it, and it will be shown in the proper place that the doctrine of the incarnation does not depend on it, because the Fourth Gospel, which deals with that doctrine most at length, declares that Jesus was the son of Joseph. To quote a brief statement by Professor C. A. Briggs, who accepted the words of the creed in regard to the Nativity, "All that we learn of the Incarnation from the teaching of Jesus, from the writings of Paul, and of John, and from the Epistle to the Hebrews, would stand firm if there had been no virgin birth; if Jesus had been born of Joseph and Mary, having father and mother as any other child."⁴

And the doctrine of the Trinity in its Scriptural form, like that of the incarnation, would stand firm regardless of the virgin story. The benediction at the close of II Corinthians, the earliest passage which suggests the doctrine, is from an Apostle who seems never to have heard of the story, and proves that the place of Christ in that solemn prayer does not depend on the physical origin of Jesus. It was not the manner of his birth, but the character of his

⁴ *The Incarnation of the Lord*, p. 217.

life and work, that led Paul to speak of his spirit as "the Lord Jesus Christ."

On every ground the story is unnecessary, and as useless as it is unnecessary. It represents the thought of the time, or that of those who incorporated it in the Evangelic records; but it proves nothing and explains nothing. It adds nothing to our understanding of Jesus or to our appreciation of his uniqueness. On the contrary, it separates him from the rest of mankind, and detracts from our interest in him as a fellow being. As it is not a help, but a hindrance, to our understanding of him, so it is not a support, but a stumbling-block, to our faith in the Gospel message. Birth by ordinary generation brings him nearer and makes him more to us by making him one of us. By so doing it enables us to take him as our exemplar, and encourages us to become like him by living in purpose and spirit as he lived.

During the past quarter of a century, such men as Bishop Carpenter and Canon Freemantle in England have been telling the world that the virgin story is not found in the earliest stratum of the Gospel, and, therefore, formed no part of original Christianity. During that period, many candidates for the ministry, especially in the United States, have refused to avow their belief in it; and in the spring of 1923 Dr. Leighton Parks, of New York, not only expressed his dissent, but also defended his denial, and challenged the bishop of his diocese to bring him to trial for heresy. About the same time

Dr. Percy Stickney Grant denounced the pastoral letter of that bishop, and defended the scholarship of those who object to the doctrine. Since then other ministers have ranged themselves on the side of dissent.

The story was written to explain the uniqueness of Jesus, and it represents the belief of the time, let it be said again, and that a time subsequent to the days of Paul and Mark. We are no more bound to believe it because two Evangelists believed it than we are bound to think the earth is flat because they thought it was. We should not expect candidates for the ministry to affirm their belief in a doctrine which they cannot preach, nor should we put a needless strain upon their faith. The teaching of Jesus does not require us to accept what is unreasonable, and he did not present an intellectual test of any kind to his followers.

For the past forty years or more the present writer has regarded the story as unworthy of credence and an obstacle to faith, and for upwards of twenty years has taught students to regard it as a traditional element in the Gospel. He has taught them also to keep an open mind with respect to the doctrine, assuring them that nothing essential to the Christianity of Christ depended on it. Deeming it inappropriate for public worship, as well as unworthy of credence, he does not think that modern Christians should be requested to repeat the words of the Creed, "Born of the virgin Mary," nor to chant the lines in the *Te Deum*, "When thou tookest

upon thee to deliver man, thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb"; nor the next two lines, "When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers."

Jesus did not take upon him to deliver man in the way the first two lines imply. He was raised up to manifest the Father and bear witness to the Truth, so that, through his manifestation and witness-bearing, men might have a personal knowledge of the only true God; and that, knowing him as thus manifested, they might have eternal life. And when he overcame the sharpness of death, he did not open the kingdom of heaven to believers, because the kingdom of heaven was always open to sincere believers, and just as truly before his death as after it. The singing of such sentiments repels some people and perpetuates misconception.

Little more remains to be said. Most thoughtful persons will agree with Dr. Washington Gladden, who many years ago protested against calling any man a heretic because he believed that Mary told the truth when she said to Jesus in the Temple, "Thy father and I sought thee sorrowing"; and all such persons will agree with the editor of the *New York Independent*, who, about the same number of years ago, declared that nothing is added to the moral greatness of Jesus by insisting on this doctrine, and that nothing is subtracted from his spiritual divinity by believing that he entered the world by the way that God has sanctioned for all his children.

Nothing would be added to him or subtracted from him for the reason previously stated, namely, that nothing vital with respect to him or his teaching depends on his nativity. Jesus was the manifestation of the Father and the mediator of eternal life regardless of his origin or birth. No matter who he was, or whence he came, or how he was conceived, he is the unique mediator between God and men, and his Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes.

CHAPTER III

THE HUMANITY

Because of his commanding personality it is necessary to show from Scripture what kind of a being the man of Nazareth was. To find the real Jesus we must go to the Gospels, particularly the first three, for they alone depict him as he lived and labored, taught and traveled, preached and prophesied.

As the Second Gospel gives the shortest and simplest, as well as the earliest, account of his career, it is necessary to begin with it, and supplement the sketch with matter from the First and Third. The Fourth may be disregarded for the present, because it is not historical to the same extent as the other three. Though Mark never saw Jesus, he is supposed to have obtained trustworthy information from the Apostle Peter, who belonged to the inner circle of the Twelve Disciples and became the leader of that chosen band.

If Jesus had a natural birth, as the preceding chapter proves he had, and was in all things made like unto his brethren, as Hebrews 2:17 declares he was, we should expect him to have been in all respects a normal being, with normal feelings and affections and normal characteristics of every kind.

That much we have a full right to assume. We know from the records that he ate and drank, and toiled and slept; that he walked and talked, and grieved and wept; and that he prayed and trusted like other devout men.

It is not recorded that he ever laughed, as many writers have observed, but he rejoiced and sympathized, formed friendships and sought companionships; and, therefore, we are justified in supposing that he found moments for laughter as surely as for tears. To suppose he never laughed appears unreasonable, for it is as natural to laugh as to weep, and with healthy natures it is a much more frequent habit. That he had little suffering and knew little of disease seems probable, because he had a sound body, and was shamefully crucified in the vigor of his manhood.

We should also expect his development to have been like that of other men; and, though Mark makes no mention of the fact because he says nothing about his childhood and youth, Luke informs us that it was. In chapter 2:40, referring to his boyhood, he says "The child grew, and waxed strong, becoming full of wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him." His development was, as shown in chapter 1:80, similar to that of John the Baptist, of whom the Evangelist also says, "The child grew, and waxed strong in spirit." Wisdom is used of Jesus in the sense of general knowledge, and grace in the sense of divine favor; and the verse teaches

that Jesus grew physically, mentally, and morally, and that his growth was natural and normal.

The incident recorded in verse 46 that, when twelve years old, he was found sitting in the Temple among the doctors, "both hearing them and asking them questions," indicates that he had a particular interest in religion at that early age. All who heard him were amazed, we are told, at his understanding and answers. But the context shows that he was present with the doctors to inquire and learn. He was there not to instruct them, but to be instructed by them. He was seeking information, not dissimulating or feigning ignorance.

In verse 51 Luke informs us that, after becoming a son of the law at the age of twelve, Jesus went down to Nazareth with his father and mother, "and was subject unto them," meaning that he yielded himself to their control till he became a man. By so doing he recognized the Biblical obligation of obedience on the part of children to their parents. This information proves conclusively that his conduct as a youth, no less than as a child, was perfectly normal. Instead of freeing himself from the parental yoke, and acting thenceforth as his own master, he followed the general custom of all pious young people with respect to filial duty.

Then in verse 52, speaking of the period of adolescence, Luke says again, "Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." Because the word translated "stature" sometimes signifies "age," many have thought the Evangelist

meant that he increased in knowledge as he advanced in age; but, while that was certainly the case, it would be a superfluous, if not a meaningless, remark. The manifest intention of Luke was to state that he grew normally, as all good children grow, and passed through all the stages of healthy human development. In that verse, as in the others, his growth is shown to have been natural and normal. To speak with Dr. Bernhard Weiss, "It is a normal growth from the innocence of childhood to complete holiness of life" that is there described.

John 7:15 represents some Jews as marveling at the learning he displayed when teaching in the Temple, and as asking, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" But, though he did not attend the schools of the Rabbis, he must have received the education common to young men of his rank, especially such moral and religious instruction as was given in the home and in the synagogue. By these means he would become well grounded in the Scriptures. Moreover, like Amos, the shepherd prophet, but in a greater degree, he learned wisdom in the school of experience by contemplating life and meditating on truth, by studying men and communing with God.

It was the wisdom that comes from above that gave him his profound knowledge of the will of God and his deep understanding of the hearts of men. Thus in every respect his development appears to have been like that of all good people. Those who think his growth in knowledge was not normal are

as unfair to reason and Scripture as were the followers of Apollinaris, who denied his real humanity. But, as Archdeacon Farrar says, "The Evangelist lets us see that Jesus, like other children, grew up in gradual knowledge, consistently with the natural course of human development."¹

Of the next eighteen years of his life nothing definite is known, the interval from twelve to thirty being historically a blank. Only one fact in regard to him during that period is recorded, and that is found in Mark 6:3, which states that he was a carpenter. As that was the occupation of his father, and as all Jewish boys were taught to learn a trade, we may readily accept the statement, and rejoice to believe it true, because everyone should have something useful to do. During that period, we may suppose that, besides helping his parents, he was getting his training and pursuing his trade, thus exemplifying the duty of service and the dignity of work. During those years, too, we may suppose that he was constantly inquiring into the things of God and steadily preparing himself for the mission to which he was divinely called.

According to Luke 3:23, Jesus began his ministry when he was about thirty years old, the age at which a priest entered upon his office. When he received his call, or how he received it, we are not told; but before commencing to teach he must have spent many years in storing his mind with religious ideas and in maturing his thoughts on the divine kingdom.

¹ *The Life of Christ*, p. 34.

While he was destined from birth to be a teacher, his mission seems to have been revealed after he attained to manhood; and his call may have been realized gradually, increasing in clearness till it became a fixed conviction, as in the case of other consecrated men of God.

The first reference to him after he began to teach occurs in Mark 1:9, which states that "Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in the Jordan." Matthew 3:14, 15 tell us that John tried to dissuade him from receiving the rite, but that Jesus replied, "Suffer it now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." Among the Jews baptism was an emblem of purification and consecration, and the information given by Matthew shows that it was proper for Jesus to fulfil the requirements of the Law with respect to consecrated life and work. On that principle he acted throughout his entire ministry, by attending the synagogue, by observing the festivals, by paying tax and tribute, and by complying with everything the Law enjoined. The picture presented by these Evangelists of the Spirit descending upon him as a dove should not be taken literally, because the descent of the Spirit is invisible. It was meant to symbolize the divine approval of his readiness to satisfy all the claims of religion. He was baptized with water to fulfil all righteousness, but the baptism of the Spirit was necessary to his complete consecration to the divine will.

After John had been committed to prison Mark

1:14 continues, "Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe in the gospel." That is his first recorded utterance after beginning his public ministry. He began to preach by proclaiming the good news about the kingdom, membership in which, he taught, depends on repentance toward God and devotion to his will.

That is the way John is said to have begun his public ministry. The fundamental condition of entering the kingdom is the same in each case. The sameness of the message shows that Jesus not only connected his teaching with that of his forerunner, but also regarded himself as a prophet. And both Mark 6:4 and Matthew 13:57 report him as saying of himself, "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house." A prophet he is said to have been in each of the other Gospels and also in the book of Acts.

Luke 7:16 reports the citizens of Nain as saying, "A great prophet is arisen among us; and, God hath visited his people"; and chapter 24:19 reports the two men on the road to Emmaus as saying that Jesus of Nazareth "was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people." John 4:19 represents the woman of Samaria as saying to him, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet"; and John 9:17 represents the man who was born blind as declaring, "He said, He is a prophet." Then in the

account of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem Matthew 21:11 tells us that the multitudes acclaimed him as "the prophet, Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee"; and Acts 3:22 reports Peter as saying of him, "Moses indeed said, A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me," which is an application to him of the substance of Deuteronomy 18:15.

Those passages assure us of three things: first, that he was a man; second, that he was a prophet; third, that he was a prophet like unto Moses. Each of these assertions calls for some discussion, and the last must be discussed at considerable length.

And, first, he was a man, a real man, having a normal human nature such as ours. Many who admit his true humanity contend that he was not a mere man. But, if he was a real man, he must have been a mere man in the strict sense of that term, though the word should not be used in a negative or qualified way to disparage or depreciate him. Used in its literal signification of pure and unmixed, the word means that he was an actual human being, no less and no more. He was, however, not an ordinary but an extraordinary man.

Every passage we have examined shows that the Evangelists viewed him as one who was naturally born and normally nurtured, and the Apostles that refer to his humanity viewed him in the same way. In Acts 2:22 Peter describes him as "a man approved of God" by mighty works. In Galatians 4:4 Paul says that he "was born of a woman," which means

that his birth was by ordinary generation, because the verb used signifies to come into being in the ordinary course of human nature; and he viewed him in the same way again, when in Romans 8:29, referring to the resurrection glory, he described him as "the first-born among many brethren," for the term first-born denotes headship or chiefship among members of the same family.

In Hebrews 2:17 the author declares that he was in all things "made like unto his brethren," which teaches that we are his brethren by virtue of the fact that we possess a common human nature; and in chapter 4:15 the writer says that Jesus was "in all points tempted like as we are," which teaches that he possessed a nature that was as truly human as ours is, for to have been tempted in all points as we are he must have been constituted in all respects as we are. All those references prove that the Apostles, no less than the Evangelists, viewed him as historically related to his brethren and genetically connected with the rest of mankind.

But does not Matthew 1:23—"They shall call his name Immanuel"—suggest something more? Not at all. That clause is an accommodated application of Isaiah 7:14, where Immanuel denotes the providential presence of God with his people to protect and deliver them from their enemies. Matthew saw a special fulfilment of the prophecy in Jesus, and applied it to him in a spiritual sense. In the prophecy the deliverance promised is from a national enemy, but in the Gospel it is from a moral enemy,

as is stated in verse 21: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for it is he that shall save his people from their sins." Jesus is not said to be God with us, but the name Immanuel is said to signify God with us; and the Evangelist meant that through him God would manifest his presence and power in a special way.

The second thing assured us is that Jesus was a prophet, that is, a man with a divine mission to teach and preach, or one inspired of God to declare his purpose and interpret his will. In Exodus 7:1 Aaron is described as a prophet to Moses, because he acted as his spokesman or interpreter; and a canonical prophet was so designated because he was called to be a spokesman for Jehovah and an interpreter of his will. With that meaning Luke 1:76 says that Zacharias called John the Baptist "the prophet of the Most High," because he should "go before the face of the Lord to make ready his ways, to give knowledge of salvation unto his people in the remission of their sins." In that same sense we shall see that Jesus regarded himself as a prophet of God or a preacher of righteousness.

On coming to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went into the synagogue, as his custom was, Luke 4:17 says, and read from Isaiah 61:1, 2 a passage which describes the mission of a Hebrew prophet: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor; he hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to

set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." After reading and explaining the passage he said to those present, "To-day hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears."

By applying the prophecy to himself he placed himself in the prophetic succession; and its application proves that he was anointed and commissioned of God, as a canonical prophet was anointed and commissioned, to discharge the duties of his office. The classes of persons mentioned—the poor, the captive, the blind, and the bruised—represent four general conditions of need. In the prophecy those terms should be taken in a literal rather than a spiritual sense, though, as sometimes used, the term poor connotes spiritual qualities; but in the Gospel they should be taken rather in a spiritual than in a literal sense.

When applying the prophecy to himself, it should be noticed, Jesus did not quote the clause, "the day of vengeance of our God," but ended with the words, "to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." That fact is significant, because it shows that, in contrast to the Mosaic dispensation, his was a dispensation of mercy, and not of vengeance. In the words, "the acceptable year of the Lord," allusion is made to the year of Jubilee, in which debts were remitted, captives released, and alienated lands restored to their original owners. The phrase suggests that the mission of Jesus was one of delivering grace, as well as one of spiritual relief.

The third thing assured us is that he was a prophet like unto Moses. The resemblances are numerous. Like Moses, who fasted for forty days before communicating the Decalogue, Jesus did the same before commencing to preach. Being led of the Spirit into a desert place, he was there subjected to a series of temptings or testings. These are arranged in one order by Matthew and in another by Luke; but each arrangement gives an imaginative account of an inner struggle through which he passed as a sort of spiritual induction into his high office.

Many think that each temptation was intended as a challenge to Jesus to prove his Messiahship by giving a spectacular demonstration of his God-bestowed power; but that idea cannot have been in the mind of Jesus because he was a prophet, not a prince, or a spiritual, not a temporal, Messiah, though some such notion appears to have been in the minds of Matthew and Luke.¹ That seems the more probable because Mark does not specify the temptations nor use the appellation "Son of God," which was a recognized title of the Messiah when Matthew and Luke were written, but was not so used of Jesus when he began to preach.

For these reasons the present writer believes it better, with Webster and Wilkinson, to regard the arrangement in Matthew as presenting the several temptations to which different classes of men are

¹ Each of them embodies in his narrative a later development of the gospel tradition, as Meyer admits.

peculiarly liable. In their expository note these scholars say: "The temptation of the ordinary man arises from bread, from those things which are needful for the body; the spiritual man has temptation from his renewed faculties, exposing him to vain conceit and spiritual pride; the distinguished man is tempted by his position in the world, which leads him to sacrifice everything for ambition, power and wealth." Distrust and pride and ambition are temptations to which all men are more or less liable.

Were these temptations real? people have often asked. And the answer is, they must have been real, if even the statement in Mark 1:13, that "he was in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan," had any basis in fact. To tempt is to test or to entice to evil, and where there is no susceptibility to testing or enticement, there can be no temptation. The Evangelists believed them to have been real, as they believed his humanity to have been real, and, therefore, similar to those which other men of God encounter. The New Testament writers know nothing of a Jesus who could not be tempted. Besides declaring that he was in all points tempted like as we are, the author of Hebrews declares in chapter 5:8 that he "learned obedience by the things which he suffered," which implies that he might have been disobedient, had he chosen to be.

Indeed, Luke 22:28 reports him as saying to his Disciples shortly before he died, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations," meaning the trials and testings to which he in common

with all good men was subjected. The Greek, like the English, word for temptation signifies trial or testing; not necessarily direct seduction to evil, but, as Dr. A. B. Davidson says of Jesus, "Afflictions in the course of a life of well-doing, and because of well-doing."² Indirectly these may become seductions to evil, of course. In principle Jesus was tempted as other good men are tempted, but his fulness of the Spirit made sin repellent to him, and enabled him to resist every solicitation to do wrong. In that way he became our great exemplar, and on that account is worthy of our lasting praise.

He withstood temptation because the thought of sinning was repugnant to him, so that, whenever enticement to evil came, it was repulsed at once. If he could not have yielded to temptation, there would have been no virtue in not yielding, for virtue is excellence that results from trial and conflict. It is Scriptural as well as rational to believe with Dr. Geikie that he "was proved and tried from his youth to Gethsemane and, like us, might have yielded, though, in fact, offering a transcendent contrast in his unbroken victory over all temptation."³ We honor him not by viewing him as one who was free from desire and exempt from passion, but rather as one who knew what sore temptations meant because he felt them. But however tempted or enticed, he resisted every evil solicitation, and with his spirit by divine grace we may do the same.

² Comment on Hebrews 4:15 in *The Handbooks for Bible Classes Series*.

³ *The Life of Christ*, p. 314, American Book Exchange.

Like Moses, too, Jesus was a mediator or, as the Greek word signifies, a go-between. In Galatians 3:19 Moses is called a mediator between Jehovah and the Israelites, because he stood between him and them to show them the word of Jehovah, as Deuteronomy 5:5 says. His mediatorship was one of communication to a certain race of men. In I Timothy 2:5 Jesus is called a mediator between God and men, that is, mankind. His mediatorship was for all men, not merely for a single race.

But, while he was a universal, not a limited, mediator, his mediatorship was the same in kind as that of Moses. In each case the mediator was a man, and in each case he came between God and other men to give them his word or communicate to them his truth. Hence they were both mediators in the very same sense. Jesus would not have been a true mediator between God and men, had he not been united in nature to us. It should be added that his mediation was one of manifestation, no less than communication, because he manifested the character of God, as well as revealed his truth and interpreted his will.

Like Moses, also, Jesus was a lawgiver, not because he abrogated the Mosaic law, but because he developed it; in other words, not because he presented a new set of doctrines, but because he restated the old ones in a more complete and comprehensive form. In the Sermon on the Mount, which contains a program of his principles, what he says respecting murder, adultery, perjury, retaliation, and benev-

olence have been appropriately designated the commands of Jesus.

In each case he interpreted and spiritualized an older precept by showing that outward acts are merely expressions of an inward disposition, and that an act is committed in the heart before it comes forth into visible manifestation in the life. He elevated ethics by dealing with the motives to action, thus purifying the springs of conduct and making morality something deeper and diviner than it had previously been held to be. He taught his followers that the moral quality of an action resides in the intention, and that an evil purpose, or a wrong desire, is an act of sin.

Like Moses, again, Jesus was the head of a dispensation, the old representing the revelation of God contained in the Old Testament, the new representing the revelation contained in the Gospel. The general idea of the word translated "testament" is arrangement or disposition of property, though it includes the idea of covenant; and the original is often rendered into English by the term covenant, because each of the two principal dispensations has the character of a covenant.

Contrasting it with the Mosaic dispensation, Hebrews 9:15 and 12:24 style the Christian dispensation "a new covenant," and Hebrews 8:6 styles it "a better covenant." It is new in the sense not of offering a new system of laws, but of founding a new order of things; it is better by reason of its deeper spirituality, its greater power to purify, its more

direct appeal to conscience, and its more adequate knowledge of the character of God. While both dispensations have the same object in view, namely, to make and keep men good by getting and keeping them right with God, the Christian dispensation is superior in each of those respects.

So thoroughly did Jesus execute the mission of a prophet that the multitudes who listened to him thought of him as nothing else. On his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, we have seen, they called him "the prophet, Jesus, from Nazareth"; and, as the expression shows, they meant the well-known prophet of that place. Whatever individuals may have believed about him, the people in general regarded him as neither a Messiah nor a ruler, but simply as a God-anointed prophet; or, as John 3:2 reports Nicodemus as saying, "a teacher come from God," which means a man divinely sent to teach and preach. That is what he claimed to be, and what the Evangelists and Apostles claim him to have been.

As did John the Baptist, he continued the work of the canonical prophets, enforcing their precepts and developing their conceptions. His teaching was based on that of the Old Testament, and the germ of everything he taught appears there. The short form of the Beatitudes in Luke 6:20-22, expressing the actual state in which his followers found themselves, was synopsized from the ancient Scriptures; and, for the most part, so was the expanded form in Matthew 5:3-12, which presents seven distinct fea-

tures of character, not seven actual conditions or states. And the leading thoughts of the Lord's Prayer are all contained in the Old Testament.

As did the canonical prophets, too, he taught men to govern their conduct by principles rather than by rules. We have an illustration in Matthew 22:37-39, where, as reported, he condensed the Ten Commandments into two: (1) "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind"; (2) "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Not merely do the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments, whose essential element is benevolent love, but they contain the fundamental principles of the Decalogue, and comprehend the whole duty of responsible beings in relation to one another and to God.

Micah 6:8 sums up the practical requirements of religion in terms of similar import: "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" According to Matthew 23:23, Jesus condensed this statement into "judgment, mercy, and faith"; and, according to Luke 11:42, instead of calling the third requirement faith, he called it "the love of God," which shows that walking humbly is equivalent to faith, and that faith in God is loving devotion to his will. Here again the whole duty of responsible beings, as regarded by both Jesus and the prophets, is comprehended in the one word love, because he who loves God truly will love his neighbor also.

Thus, in principle, the teaching of Jesus was identical with that of the ancient prophet, for under one or other of Micah's categories we can arrange everything essential that Jesus taught.

His teaching, like that of the canonical prophets, may be expressed in the pregnant word righteousness, which Matthew Arnold called the "master-word" of the Old Testament, but which in a much deeper sense is the master-word of the New, because Jesus gave it a richer content by making it consist in inward rectitude, or conformity of conduct to the moral law. Insisting on a clear conscience and a single eye, he stresses as no other teacher has ever stressed the righteousness of motives. "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees," he says in Matthew 5:20, "ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." The righteousness of the Gospel exceeds the righteousness both of the law and of the prophets, first, in that it is inward and spiritual; and, secondly, in that it extends to all relationships in life.

Furthermore, Jesus executed his mission in a manner similar to that of a canonical prophet. He moved from place to place, teaching and admonishing the people, condemning iniquity and dishonesty, denouncing hypocrisy and formality, and preaching repentance and faith. In addition to what they did, or on a much larger scale, he went about doing good, comforting the afflicted and relieving the distressed, rejoicing with those who rejoiced and weeping with

those who wept. In these and other ways he exercised the office and performed the function of a heaven-appointed herald of salvation.

His manner of presenting truth also was similar to that of a canonical prophet. He had the same interest in the welfare of his nation and the same desire that Israel should be saved. His immediate mission was to the Jews and his personal ministry was chiefly confined to them. "I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," Matthew 15:24 reports him as having said. Moreover, he had the same directness of address, and the same plainness and pointedness of speech; but, by reason of his larger knowledge of divine things, he spoke with fuller assurance and greater authority. With such power did he proclaim the truth that, as stated in the preceding chapter, officers sent to apprehend him excused themselves for not doing so on the ground that "never man so spake."

Owing to his pictorial habit of thought and the promiscuous character of his hearers, he employed a parabolic form of teaching in an exceptional degree. This he appears to have done partly from preference, because it was natural to him; and partly from experience, because it suited his purpose better and was a more effective method of presenting moral truth.

But, while he spoke more frequently in parables than any of his predecessors, he drew his illustrations, as they drew theirs, from the birds of the air, from the flowers of the field, from the signs in the

sky, from familiar objects in nature, and from ordinary occupations among men. As they likewise did, he often alluded to country customs and practices, and his discourses were replete with references to rural scenes and associations.

Canonical prophets were reformers and statesmen, as well as teachers and preachers. Jesus was a reformer, too, but not a statesman, because there was no Jewish state in his day. Hence he did not meddle with politics nor deal with political subjects. Neither was he strictly a social reformer, because the circumstances of the time did not permit him to be. For that reason, doubtless, he did not attack slavery nor the abuses of society. But, while he did not discuss political subjects, he uttered precepts by the practice of which politics might be purified; and, while he did not attack slavery nor the abuses of society, he proclaimed principles by the application of which slavery would in due time be abolished and social abuses of every kind removed. The Golden Rule, which is a summary of the Sermon on the Mount, is also the foundation of social morality. It is a positive rule of action which, if properly applied, will settle every social question and solve every social problem that may confront mankind.

Jesus was a religious rather than a social reformer, and he reformed every important feature of ancient Judaism. We have seen how he spiritualized the Decalogue and gave a richer content to righteousness; and we have but to study the Gospels closely to see that he gave a wider acceptation to the word

neighbor, and a deeper significance to the institution of the Sabbath. Luke 10:37 shows that he extended the notion of neighbor from that of one who embraces our religion or belongs to our nation to that of one whom we have power to help; and Mark 2:27 shows that he liberalized the old idea of Sabbath observance by declaring that the Sabbath was made for man, his greatest benefit or his highest welfare; and, therefore, it should not be made a day of bondage nor of superstitious veneration.

Jesus was a prophet, because he stood in the prophetic succession and exercised the prophetic office; but he was also the prophet of prophets, because he executed the prophetic mission more completely than any other. While the ethical monotheism of the prophets was implicit in all that he taught, he filled up or filled out their conceptions and perfected the progressive revelation they transmitted to the Jews. By so doing he gave the world a disclosure of the will of God concerning the relations of men with him and their duties to one another which makes his revelation final in the sense that nothing can surpass it as a means of salvation or exceed it as a way of life. His revelation is thus not only higher and fuller than any other, but also perfect or complete in each of those respects.

His perfect statements of doctrine prove that he was an original as well as an authoritative teacher, but his originality is seen in the realm of the spirit rather than in that of the intellect, though all reverent students must admit that he was preëmi-

nently a religious genius. It lay not so much in the new things he said as in the new way he said them. In other words, it consisted not so much in publishing what is new as in presenting what he taught in a fuller and completer form.

To speak more amply, it is not so much the new truth he revealed as the new spirit he communicated and the new life he inspired that made him the mightiest moral force that ever entered the world. These constitute his most conspicuous contribution to the religious knowledge of mankind. They are the things that have made him the unique power he has been, that make him the unique power he is now, and that will make him a unique power to the end of time.

Though his main ideas were old, he so expanded and spiritualized them as to make them almost appear new, his most original ideas being the father-ship of God to man and the childship of man to God. Hence the greatest originality of his teaching is its spirituality.

Such was the actual Jesus of history as the records describe him, as the Disciples regarded him, and as the Apostles referred to him. He was a real man in the full sense of the term, like one of us, having feelings and affections akin to ours, and compassed with limitations similar to those which we have. He was constituted just as we are, and had the same physical nature, the same moral faculty, the same religious instinct, the same impulse to prayer, and the same desire for fellowship with God.

But he was also a prophetic teacher and a religious reformer whose personality was not a gift, but an achievement; and whose life of communion with God enabled him not only to obtain a perfect revelation of his will, but also to utter precepts that are of universal significance, and to proclaim principles that are of perpetual application, being suitable for people of every class, of every condition, and of every race.

CHAPTER IV

THE DIVINITY

Except for dogmatic theology and traditional orthodoxy, we should not be required to consider the divinity of Jesus apart from his humanity. Both might have been considered together. But religious teachers have so generally emphasized his divinity more than his humanity, many having stressed the former to the neglect of the latter, that it is necessary to ascertain in what sense the New Testament writers viewed him as divine.

So far as the records show, Jesus did not say anything about his origin or his person. He did not claim divinity, much less essential deity, nor is the claim implied in any of his utterances. He knew nothing of a virgin birth; and, if a miraculous origin were conceivable, it would not prove his divinity, as has already been evinced. The accounts of his birth in Matthew and Luke, like the other stories in the first chapter of Luke, represent the beliefs of those who wrote them, not actual historic facts recorded at the time when he was born.

Hence, as in previous chapters, our data must be gathered from the Christian Scriptures, though from the Fourth Gospel and the Epistles rather than the

Synoptic Gospels, because they contain nothing to suggest that Jesus was divine in any sense other than that in which the prophets were. The difference between his teaching and theirs consists in its completeness and spirituality, and the same thing may be said of the difference between his nature and theirs. He fulfilled the Law and the Prophets, but he recognized that Moses and his successors were men of God in the same sense that he was. While he was greater than any of them, his superiority was one of degree, and not of kind.

In our discussion of his divinity we must avoid all forms of philosophy in the technical or speculative sense of that word, because the Biblical writers thought of every religious subject in a practical way. They knew nothing even of a metaphysical Deity. God is described by them as a great Moral Being, infinite and eternal, who manifests his wisdom in nature, who reveals his will in Scripture, and who makes his presence known and felt in experience. As already stated, every religious doctrine in the Bible is expressed in terms of experience. It was the application of metaphysics to the Scriptures, or the explanation of their teaching in terms of philosophy, that led the early theologians astray; and that method of dealing with doctrine is misleading many Christian teachers still.

For the present, therefore, we are not concerned with statements of doctrine expressed according to the peculiar philosophy of those who constructed the creeds, because they did not think in the forms nor

speak in the terms of the Evangelists and Apostles. Their habits of thought and modes of speech were quite unscriptural. Neither should we pay any attention to dogmatic theologians, for by their unbiblical philosophy they have perpetuated most of the misconceptions that appear in the ancient Symbols. Like the creed-makers, they have not only ascribed to Jesus attributes that he did not possess, but also made claims for him which he did not make for himself, and which the writers of Scripture did not dream of making for him.

At the beginning of our era, and long before, there was a tendency to deify men. Roman emperors were often deified after their death, and in all ages there has been a tendency to hypostatize abstractions into personal existences. But the Biblical writers did not do that, nor did the Jewish Rabbis. They did not deify persons nor hypostatize abstractions; but they had a practice of personifying attributes, and of representing them as real agencies. This practice is apparent in the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament and in the Logos doctrine of the New. It is also apparent in the Pauline doctrine of the Son, as will later be shown. Because divine attributes are often made to speak or act, many personified passages have been misinterpreted.

For instance, the eighth chapter of Proverbs represents Wisdom as calling on men to be prudent, or understanding of heart, because that state of heart yields fruit that is of more value than silver or gold. There Wisdom, which is a feminine noun in both

Greek and Hebrew, is personified and made to speak. Notwithstanding its feminine gender, many old commentators took it to mean Christ. But the English word is neuter, and the term is used impersonally. The writer has simply personified a divine attribute, so that Wisdom made to speak represents God himself speaking.

Because the Fourth Gospel is thought to prove the deity of Christ, let us begin with it. The last clause of the first verse, "the word was God," is supposed to teach the essential deity of Jesus; but that is a misconception, as there was no such thought in the mind of the Evangelist. He was thinking not of an essence, but of an attribute. Word there is the impersonal revelation of God, just as Wisdom is in the eighth chapter of Proverbs; but in that chapter Wisdom is made to speak for God, whereas in this chapter Word is made to act for him. But, as Wisdom speaking is God speaking, so Word acting is God acting. In each case it is something in God that is represented as revealing his truth or as executing his purpose. The Word was not Jesus, but that in God which made him the unique manifestation of the Father, as will be shown in the succeeding chapter.

An expression in chapter 10:30—"I and the Father are one"—has also been a fruitful source of misconception. A false interpretation of these words has led millions of people astray. The key to their meaning is found in chapter 17:11, where Jesus, praying for his followers, is made to say,

"Holy Father, keep them in thy name which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are"; and in verse 21: "that they may all be one, even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us"; and again in verse 22: "that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one." So Jesus was one with the Father as we are one with him and the Father, and also with one another. Hence the oneness was neither physical nor metaphysical, neither personal nor essential, but ethical, as Meyer says, and as anyone may see.

Another expression that has led people astray occurs in chapter 14:9: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." But the explanation of the clause is very simple. It must be interpreted in the light of John 1:18: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him," that is, revealed or manifested him. When men saw Jesus, they did not see God, for God cannot be seen by mortal eyes; but they saw that in him which proves him to be a loving Father. In other words, he showed that, while his chief attribute in relation to his works is Wisdom, his chief attribute in relation to his creatures is Love. No man has seen, or can see, God, but the incarnation is a manifestation of his character. Jesus showed not merely what God is like, but what his children should be like in their intercourse with one another. In short, as in Matthew 5:45-48, he showed that God is a loving

Father, perfect and impartial, and, therefore, they should resemble him in being perfect or complete in their exercise of benevolent love.

Still another expression that has misled many people occurs in John 20:28, where, in an account of the manifestation of Jesus to the Disciples after the crucifixion, Thomas is said to have exclaimed, "My Lord and my God." Some scholars have thought these words were meant to be an acknowledgment of his deity. Even Dr. Plummer considered them an impassioned declaration of a skeptical Apostle of "his conviction, not merely that his risen Lord stood before him, but that this Lord was also his God." Such a supposition is inconsistent with the dramatized character of the Gospel, as well as contrary to the philosophized teaching of the Evangelist. The expression is a joyful exclamation of surprise at seeing Jesus, not a dogmatic avowal of belief in his divinity, as Dr. Bernhard Weiss has rightly observed.¹

In no part of this Gospel is it suggested that Jesus is God. Such a suggestion would have been impossible from one who had been born and bred a Jew. The purpose of the author is expressed in the last verse of this chapter, which once formed the conclusion of the book. "These (things) are written," he says to his readers, "that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name." The object of the writer was not to teach the divinity of Jesus, but to

¹Revised German edition of Meyer.

assert his Messiahship, namely, that he was the Son of God in whose name, or in whose spirit, all who believe unto righteousness obtain eternal life, not in another world, but here and now.

Let us next examine the Epistles to see what they teach regarding the subject. There are only a few passages that need to be studied, and these are mostly found in the Pauline Epistles, though there is one in Second Peter that has long been in dispute. "It is a matter of question," remarks Cremer in his lexicon of the New Testament, "whether the name *θεός* is given to Christ in Romans 9:5; Titus 2:13; II Thessalonians 1:12; II Peter 1:1." With the distinction between person and spirit kept in mind the true meaning of each passage may be plainly shown.

Following the order of the lexicon, we must first interpret Romans 9:5. In the New Revision this is rendered, "Whose are the fathers and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever." Then in the margin the revisers say: "Some modern interpreters place a full stop after *flesh*, and translate, *He who is God over all be (is) blessed forever*; or, *He who is over all is God, blessed forever*. Others punctuate, *flesh, who is over all. God be (is) blessed forever*."

Now which of these translations is correct? That must be determined partly from the context and partly from Biblical usage, and both Old and New Testament usages are so uniform as to leave no reasonable ground to doubt concerning what the

Apostle meant by the last clause of the verse. But for dogmatic considerations his meaning would never have been called in question.

Paul is here speaking of the human origin of Jesus. Having mentioned certain distinctions peculiar to the Israelites, he mentions one that exceeds every other, namely, that from them sprang the Christian Messiah, who is called Christ in the New Testament. Then at the end of the verse he praises God for having given him to mankind. Hence the first translation suggested in the margin indicates the correct meaning of the passage. Placing a period after the word *flesh*, we should translate, "Whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh. He who is God over all be blessed forever." This rendering is conformable to the Apostle's use of similar terms elsewhere.

For example, in Romans 1:25 Paul describes the Creator as one "who is blessed forever"; and in II Corinthians 11:31 he speaks of the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ as "he who is blessed forevermore." With the exception of the words "over all," which are never so used of Christ, the phrase is identical in form with that in Romans 9:5, and refers, as before, to God the Creator of all things. Other examples occur in Ephesians 1:3 and in I Peter 1:3, in each of which passages the expression, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," is found.

With the ordinary translation of Romans 9:5 the verse is supposed to teach that Jesus was both God

and man; but that is a creedal, not a Scriptural, supposition. A person cannot be both God and man, and Paul cannot have entertained so strange an idea. The Apostle who declared there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, cannot have imagined such a thing. The reference in all of these Epistles can only be to the Supreme Being.

Next in order comes Titus 2:13, which is rendered in the Revised Version, "Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ." That translation, however, is inexcusably wrong, and one wonders how the revisers could have given it; for the rendering in the Authorized Version is not simply better, but substantially correct. It reads, "Looking for that (the) blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

Two objects of thought are here mentioned, namely, God the Father and Christ the Savior, as they are in chapter 1:4: "Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Saviour." Though the word Father is not repeated in chapter 2:13, it is implied. The revisers have inserted an alternative in the margin which ought to have been printed in the text. The verse should read, "Looking for (or awaiting) the blessed hope, and manifestation of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." The Apostle refers to those who were then cherishing the hope of a speedy appearing of Christ, whose coming he regarded as a manifestation of the glory of the Father; but he did not think for a

moment of styling Christ God. The idea was as alien to his thinking here as it is shown to have been in the previous passage.

Second Thessalonians 1:12 is rightly translated by the revisers, but is wrongly interpreted by many students of Scripture. In that verse the Apostle prays that the name of the Lord Jesus may be glorified in the Thessalonian Christians, and they in him, "according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ." The reciprocal glorification of believers by Christ and of Christ by believers is what the verse teaches, so that the meaning of the passage is very plain.

Here, again, the Spirit of God and the spirit of Jesus are described as acting in association. That was a uniform and consistent practice on the part of the Apostle. Because of that association, one commentary says that it represents "our Lord Jesus in his manifested personality as the God-man," and another asserts that it implies "the essential deity of our Lord." But the Apostle does not call our Lord Jesus the God-man, nor does he speak of his essential deity. He unifies the divine Spirit with the spirit of Jesus in thought and unites them in experience, but he does not identify them. The divine Spirit is always viewed as the Author of the activity of the spirit of Jesus. They are regarded as one in character, but the oneness is not conceived as a metaphysical unity. This oneness is expressed also in I Thessalonians 3:11, where the Apostle prays, "May our God and Father himself, and our Lord

Jesus, direct our way unto you," which means that God guides believers through their union with him in Christ, or in association with Christ, as their life-element.

Second Peter 1:1 is wrongly translated in the text of the Revised Version, but is rightly translated in the margin. In the former Peter is made to address his Epistle to them that have obtained a like precious faith with us in the righteousness of "our God and Saviour Jesus Christ," which is a misleading translation. In the latter the Greek is rightly rendered, "Our God and the Saviour Jesus Christ." The revisers had no just excuse for placing in the text the translation which they did.

Their translation has perplexed many readers and caused many others to misinterpret the verse. It has been taken by some students to furnish an argument for the deity of the Lord Jesus, whereas the passage was not so intended and should not be so used. Here, as before, the Spirit of God and the spirit of Jesus are unified in thought and united in experience; but the Apostle does not identify them, nor does he make any reference whatever to the deity of Christ.

Had these disputed passages been properly translated and scripturally interpreted, there could have been no question as to their true meaning. Not one of them teaches that the term *θεός* should be given to Christ, nor does any other passage suggest such a thing. The Evangelists and Apostles regarded Christ Jesus as the Son of God and the mediator of

eternal life, but the idea that he was God never entered any of their minds. The very thought would have been pagan and repellent to them.

His remark to the young man who, according to Mark 10:17, addressed him as "Good Master," shows how promptly Jesus would have rejected such a notion. "Why callest thou me good?" he replied; "none is good save one, even God." The Fourth Evangelist, whose object was to prove his Messiahship, refers repeatedly to the subordination of the Son to the Father. In chapter 3:34 he represents Jesus as saying, "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God"; in chapter 5:19, "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father doing"; in chapter 6:44, "No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him"; and in chapter 8:28, "I do nothing of myself, but as the Father taught me, I speak these things." Limitation, as well as subordination, is often expressed, and is everywhere implied.

Toward the end of the book, in chapter 20:17, the author of this Gospel represents the risen Christ as saying to Mary Magdalene, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended unto the Father: but go unto my brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and my God and your God." No language could more plainly show that this writer, like every other New Testament writer, regarded Jesus as a real man, and the Disciples as his true brethren; nor could any language more clearly prove that he had no thought of deifying

him, for Jesus is here viewed as participating with his followers in a filial relation to his Father and in a human relation to his God.

Besides the disputed passages examined, there are several others that call for explanation or comment, not because they teach anything different or additional, but because they have generally been misinterpreted, and are still widely misunderstood. They are all interesting.

The most important of these occurs in Colossians 2:9: "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." The Apostle affirmed this of Christ Jesus in his present glorified state, but he had no thought of claiming essential deity for him. The term translated Godhead signifies godhood or divinity, that is, the state of being divine; and the fulness mentioned is a fulness of the divine attributes, analogous to that described in John 1:14, which says that Jesus was "full of grace and truth," or, as in the corresponding phrase in Hebrew, full of kindness and faithfulness.

We find a similar affirmation in chapter 1:19, where the Apostle says, "It was the good pleasure of the Father that in him should all the fulness dwell." The complete phrase occurs in Ephesians 3:19, where the Apostle prays that the Christians at Ephesus may be able to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that they "may be filled unto all the fulness of God." There one of the strongest

expressions used of Christ in the New Testament is used of professing Christians, which shows that they are expected to be filled with God in the same sense that he is filled with him.

Notwithstanding that fact, from the time of Tertullian there has been a tendency on the part of theologians to differentiate the word θεότης (godhood) in Colossians 2:9 from the word θεϊότης (godhood) in Romans 1:20, by making the latter signify divinity and the former essential deity. But that distinction is quite unwarranted, because there is nothing in either term that suggests essential deity. The Latin Vulgate translates each word by *divinitas*; the French versions, both Catholic and Protestant, by *divinité*; and the German versions by *Gottheit*. In each case the word used signifies the state of being divine. In Romans 1:20 the Apostle speaks of divinity manifested in material nature, but in Colossians 2:9 he speaks of divinity manifested in human character. The two verses together express the complete revelation of God in his world and in his Son.

In a similar way we should explain Colossians 1:15, which says that the Son is "the image of the invisible God," and Hebrews 1:3, which says that he is "the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance." In each of these verses the glorified Jesus, regarded in the relation of a Son, is described as the manifestation of him who is invisible; but it is a manifestation of divine attributes that is meant. There is no suggestion of essential deity in either

place. The thought of each writer is that he so represents God that his nature becomes cognizable or his character apprehensible by us, as an image in a mirror or a figure in the water reflects the likeness of a person; or as a beam of light radiates brightness that corresponds to the luminous object from which it emanates. The very image of his substance means nothing more than a visible expression of the divine excellences. We must not think of certain features impressed upon something, as of a stamp with the seal or of a coin with the die. The whole manifestation is conceived as spiritual. No form is supposed.

An old rendering of a clause in I Timothy 3:16—"God was manifest in the flesh"—deserves a passing notice, because it has been so often quoted in proof of the deity of Christ. But, since the word *God* rests on no sufficient evidence, the word *ὁς* having been changed to *θεός* in the ancient manuscript, the revisers translate, "He who was manifested in the flesh," which merely means that Jesus was manifested in our human nature. The clause is one of several particulars wherein he has been revealed as a ground for reverential feeling on the part of his followers. The thought in the Apostle's mind was, as Dean Alford says, that Christ Jesus is the great revelation of the religious life. That well-known scholar adds, "There is hardly a passage in the New Testament in which I feel more deep personal thankfulness for the restoration of the true and wonderful connection of the original text."

Another passage that calls for comment is in I John 5:20: "This is the true God, and eternal life." Many commentators have misunderstood that sentence. One of them has asserted, and some have been misled by the assertion, that John there teaches that the Son, on whom our being in the true God rests, is the true God himself. That is, however, the very opposite of what the Apostle meant. In the previous part of the verse he says, "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we know him that is true (that is, God); and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ." The meaning of the verse is obvious. By virtue of our union with the Son we are in union with God who sent him. Then follows the statement: "This (God so manifested and known) is the true God, and eternal life." The sentiment is similar to that in John 17:3: "This is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ."

Here, as elsewhere, the Apostle contemplated Christ as the mediator of eternal life. That is how he is contemplated in every Epistle that refers to his mediatorial mission. There is no exception anywhere. It was later interpreters of Jesus who did not understand the terms employed by the Biblical writers that misled the theologians. To the Apostles, Christ was only the representative of God in the work of revelation and redemption. He is always regarded as subordinate to God, and in I Corinthians

15:28 Paul describes him as destined after his work has been accomplished to become subject to God. "When all things have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all," the Apostle says.

In the Apocalypse the spirit of Jesus and the spirit of God are unified, as they are in the Epistles, because of the spiritual unity of the Father and the Son; but, from beginning to end of the New Testament, Christ is nowhere called God. By all the Apostles he is set forth as the Son of God and the mediator of eternal life, and men who had been trained in Judaism could not have viewed him in a diviner way. No one who understood the theism of the prophets, no one who appreciated their habits of thought and their modes of speech, could possibly have thought of anything more.

Some scholars are of opinion that the attributes of omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence are ascribed to him, but that opinion is an erroneous one. Moral perfections, or communicable attributes, are ascribed to him; but non-moral perfections are incommunicable, and are possessed only by God himself. They are his alone and cannot be given to anyone. The Gospels show that Jesus had a limited knowledge and a limited prescience, and, therefore, was not endowed with omniscience. Concerning the end of the age, Matthew 24:36, with which Mark 13:32 corresponds, reports him as saying, "Of that day and hour knoweth no one, not

even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only." Respecting matters not pertaining to religion he shared the general beliefs of his time, and he did not claim acquaintance with either science or philosophy. The Gospels show also that he did not possess all power, and that the power he did possess was given to him. That assertion is proved by an utterance attributed to Jesus after his crucifixion. "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth," Matthew 28:18 reports him as saying. The word for authority signifies delegated, not original, power. It is here used of his spirit, but is elsewhere used of his person; and it always denotes power bestowed, not power independently possessed. And his spirit is never said to be omnipresent, because it goes only where it is taken, as is shown in the first chapter of this work.

Many scholars have supposed that he performed an act of Deity when, according to Mark 2:5 and Luke 5:20, he said to a paralytic, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." There is no ground, however, for that supposition. God only has the power to forgive sins, as the Scribes and Pharisees told the people when accusing him of blasphemy for uttering those words. That is his sole prerogative, and one which he cannot share with any other being. But Jesus did not claim the power to forgive sins, nor do the Evangelists say that he did. The word they use is that discussed in the preceding paragraph, and it signifies authority, or delegated power. The revisers insert that word in the margin in Mark 2:10 and Luke

5:24; but they should have placed it in the text, and they had no excuse for not placing it there.

The meaning is that authority was given him to pronounce sins forgiven, when he had proof that a person was entitled to forgiveness; and the same authority is said to have been given by the Spirit to the Apostles, when they saw that the condition on which forgiveness is granted had been fulfilled. "Whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever sins ye retain they are retained," John 20:23 declares. Consistently with this explanation, the Church of England teaches that each ordained minister is entitled "to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins."

Then it is claimed by many that Jesus received worship due only to God, and that certain ascriptions of honor imply his deity; but no claim could be more unscriptural, and no statement could be further from the truth. The word for worship in Greek is used both of God and of men, and so is the corresponding word in Hebrew. When used of God, it means to reverence or adore him as the Supreme Being; when used of men, it means to do homage, to make obeisance, to bow low before another in honor or respect. In the Gospels, where it is frequently used in relation to Jesus, it is always employed in that sense; and so it is in the Epistles, when used of his spirit or of the angels of God. That sense is uniformly given in the translation by those who prepared The Twentieth Century New Testa-

ment, and it should always have been given in our English Versions. Hebrews 1:6 affords a good example of how the revisers should have rendered that passage into English. Instead of translating, "Let all the angels of God worship him," they should have translated, "Let all the angels of God bow down before him," as the company of twentieth-century scholars translated it.

To see how unscriptural is the claim that he should be worshiped we have but to turn to Revelation 5:12, where a great company of elders are represented as praising him in the spirit world, saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honour, and glory, and blessing." He is there viewed as worthy to receive the highest forms of praise, but not to receive the worship due only to God. On the contrary, the duty of worshiping God, and of worshiping him alone, is repeatedly expressed in this book. To the writer of Revelation, as to the other writers of Scripture, the worship of Christ as God was a thing incredible.

It was impossible of belief by them for two reasons: first, because Jesus prayed to God and worshiped him as the Supreme Being; and, second, because Jesus was a man who suffered pain and died on Calvary. They knew that God could not be worshiped by God, as they knew that God could neither suffer nor change. The practice of deifying Christ in thought and speech, or in prayer and

praise, should be discontinued, because it is utterly unscriptural.

All hymns, therefore, which refer to Christ as God, like that by Wesley, one verse of which commences, "My gracious Master and my God," should be changed; as should also those which speak of him as a God who died, like that by Watts, one stanza of which begins, "Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, Save in the death of Christ, my God." The former should read, "My gracious Master and my Lord"; and the latter should run, "Forbid, O God, that I should boast, Save in the death of Christ, my Lord."

Professor Ritschl, who founded a school of theology in Germany in the last century, held that Christ was not God, but that he has the value of God for us. Nothing, however, can have the full value of God for us, as nothing can have the full value of the sun for us. The moon may have the value of the sun for certain things, but the moon derives its radiance from the sun, and all the light reflected by it is received from the sun. The moon has its place and serves its purpose, but it would not do much without the sun.

And Christ would not do much without God; for, as John 5:19 makes Jesus say, "The Son can do nothing of himself." If received into the heart, the spirit of Jesus will make us good men and women; but it is God who prompts us to receive it, and it is he who makes it active and effective. As John 6:44 also represents Jesus as saying, "No man can come

to me, except the Father which sent me draw him." Jesus gave men a fuller knowledge of God and a stronger desire for fellowship with him, but only as God filled him with his Spirit. We can never know his significance in the realm of religion, nor can we ever estimate his importance to the world, but we must not regard him as anything more or as anything less than what the New Testament writers regarded him, that is, the Son of God and the mediator of eternal life.

Since Jesus was the extraordinary being they claim him to have been, it must still be shown what there was about him that made him so extraordinary. On that point the Scriptures are very explicit, and there is complete agreement among the writers.

The first thing exceptional that they claimed for him was his freedom from sin. In II Corinthians 5:21 he is described as one "who knew no sin"; in John 8:46 as one whom no man could convict "of sin"; and in Hebrews 7:26 as "separated from sinners," because of being holy, guileless, and undefiled. The remark of Pilate recorded in Luke 23:4—"I find no fault in this man"—means merely that he found no ground for accusation against him, nor any reason for prosecuting him.

The second thing exceptional that they claimed for him was his fulness of God. "He giveth not the Spirit by measure," John 3:34 declares. The words "to him" in the Authorized Version are not found in the Revised Version, but they are evidently implied, because in the same verse the Evangelist

refers to Jesus as speaking the words of God, and draws a sharp distinction between him and all other inspired teachers. Hence he meant that, in contrast to all others, Jesus received the Spirit in unmeasured fulness, which supposes the fullest possible measure of divine knowledge and divine life.

That explanation is confirmed by what the Apostle states in Colossians concerning the spirit of Jesus in the other world. Referring to his precedence in rank as head of the Church, he says of Christ in chapter 1:19, "It was the good pleasure of the Father that in him should all the fulness dwell"; in chapter 2:3, referring again to the preëminence of Christ, he says that in him "are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden"; and in verse 9, referring still to his preëminence, he says that in him "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

Hence the same sort of fulness is claimed for him by the Apostle as by the Evangelist, namely, a fulness of the communicable attributes of God. That is the same kind of fulness that all Christians should have, or should seek to possess; for, as is shown elsewhere in this chapter, in Ephesians 3:19 the Christians at Ephesus are exhorted to "be filled unto all the fulness of God," and in Colossians 1:9 the Christians at Colossae are exhorted to "be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding."

Freedom from sin and fulness of God are the two exceptional things that are claimed for him by the

New Testament writers, and the former was the result of the latter, because both were owing to volitional effort. He was free from sin, because he would not yield to temptation; and he was full of God, because he delighted to do the will of the Father. So Peter teaches in chapter 2:21-23 of his first Epistle, where he says that he "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." By so doing he made himself a pattern for our imitation, and left us an example that we should follow in his steps.

Jesus was divine in a unique degree. To believe that he was anything more is to believe what is unscriptural. Those who have taught that he was anything more have not simply prejudiced Jews and perplexed Christians, but made skeptics of many earnest men. They have done more and worse than that. They have caused multitudes of people to become indifferent to the Gospel and to lose interest in its eternal verities. They have so explained his personality that it ceases to have any significance for modern scientific minds, because their explanation implies that his experience of God was unlike that which other good men have, and that his nature and origin were different from that of any other man; whereas the Scriptures teach that his origin was the same as ours, and that his experience was similar to that of every regenerated member of the Church.

The proof of his divinity is the perfection of his humanity. As he is pictured in the Gospels and described in the Epistles, it was the spiritual element in him that made him different from the rest of men. Its spirituality is what differentiates his teaching from that of his predecessors; his spirituality is what differentiates his character from all others, and it was the spiritual qualities he exhibited that led the Apostles to regard him as the unique expression of the Father and the Supreme revelation of the divine life; for his greatest uniqueness is that he practiced what he preached, and taught as truly by his life as by his words. It was by actually living as he taught that he made himself our perfect exemplar.

Now we may see how Jesus is claimed in Scripture to have been unique, and also how he is regarded by the writers as divine. They claimed him to have been the God-filled man, the one in whom the Deity dwelt as he has not dwelt in any other of the sons of men. They held that the divine Spirit was given to him plenarily, and not partially. But, while they hold that he had the plenary gift of the Spirit, they teach that his followers may obtain all they are able and willing to receive. In the matter of spiritual privilege Jesus claimed nothing for himself that he did not wish his followers to have, and the Apostles teach that he desired to share every privilege he possessed with them.

Thus they regarded him as divine as they regarded every other man as divine, when he receives the

Spirit of God and becomes conformed to the image of his Son, that is, to the moral excellence exhibited in the Son, as Romans 8:29 teaches. They do not separate him from the rest of mankind, nor put him in a class by himself. On the contrary, by virtue of his union with our nature they viewed him as one with us; and by virtue of our conformity to his image, as the first-born of many brethren. Hence they put him not in a class, but in a grade, by himself. They placed him as a person at the head of humanity, and as a spirit at the head of the Church, which represents a new and regenerated race of beings who reflect his likeness. They thus regarded him as the elder brother of those who have been renewed in the spirit of their mind, or as one who sustains a fraternal relation to all who belong to the household of faith.

As our elder brother and our spiritual exemplar, Jesus was divine as we are divine. All goodness comes from God and all moral excellence is the same in kind. It is all obtained by human effort through coöperation with the divine Spirit. Our divinity is the same in kind as his, therefore, because godly men are all divine in the same sense, and piety is the same in kind in all good people. The difference is merely one of degree in spiritual development or in spiritual attainment. When our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, we not only partake of the divine nature, but also participate in the divine life, as Jesus did.

It is because he was divine in the sense that we

may be that he could be our exemplar, and that we can become like him in purpose and spirit; for he showed that all men may be remade—their nature renewed and their character transformed. He showed, too, what a divine thing human nature is when God renews and sanctifies it, and what a noble being man may be when God dwells in the heart and dominates the personality. Though he was the ideal man, his life is a challenge to us, as well as a pattern for our imitation.

Some modern teachers contend that we should speak of the deity rather than the divinity of Christ, because there are many who say they believe in his divinity, but not in his deity. That distinction, however, is incorrect, because the two words mean the same thing. Spelled with a capital letter, each denotes the Deity; spelled with a small letter, each denotes a heathen idol, but may be used of a being that partakes of the divine nature or qualities in a marked degree.

In a symposium that appeared in the *Sunday School Times* of September 3, 1910, Dr. Sanday said that he was not in the habit of making any distinction between them, and no distinction other than that just mentioned should be made. We may speak of the divinity of Christ or of the deity of Christ, in the sense explained; but the former is preferable, because the latter has so long been taken to denote essential deity, an idea that is utterly alien to the Scriptures. When Canon Liddon wrote his Bampton Lecture half a century or more ago, the title he

chose was *Our Lord's Divinity*. That was the term then used, and is the one we should always use.

It is not necessary to discuss the consciousness of Jesus, because there is no ground for supposing that it was inherently different from ours. Since he was born of Jewish parents and was nurtured in a Jewish home, since he mingled with Jewish people and worshipped in Jewish synagogues, he must have had a consciousness like that of Jeremiah or John the Baptist, and like that of Paul or Peter, and of James or Jude. That he had a richer communion with the Father and a fuller portion of his Spirit than they had there are the best of reasons for believing, but that his religious consciousness was essentially different from theirs there is no good reason to assume.

Nor is it necessary to discuss his two natures because, if his humanity and his divinity and his consciousness were the same in kind as ours, he had two natures only in the same sense that we have. That is to say, he had a material body and a rational soul, as every normal man or woman has. The doctrine of two souls and two wills rests on neither reason nor Scripture. It is contrary to all sound psychology and all sane thinking. The Evangelists and Apostles never heard of it, and never supposed that anything so unreasonable would ever be conceived.

According to Matthew 6:9, Jesus associated himself with his Disciples when he taught them to pray, "Our Father which art in heaven"; and, according to John 4:22, he associated himself with his fellow

countrymen when he said to the woman of Samaria, "Ye (Samaritans) worship that which ye know not; we (Jews) worship that which we know." Matthew 7:21 reports him as saying, "My Father which is in heaven," and Matthew 5:45 as saying, "Your Father which is in heaven." Such passages show how the Evangelists viewed him in relation to both God and men.

Nothing more requires to be said. Taken in connection with what the Apostles declare concerning him, they prove conclusively that he was human in the same sense that we are, and that he was divine in the same sense, too, if we are his true followers. No one should claim for him what the Scriptures do not claim for him, and what he did not claim for himself. We cannot be all that Jesus was, nor do all that Jesus did, because he had the plenary gift of the Spirit, or a fulness of God which made him the manifestation of the Father; but there is nothing he was or did that his disciples are not to be and do, so far as they are able and circumstances may require.

CHAPTER V

THE INCARNATION

Incarnation signifies the act of becoming embodied in flesh, that is, in human nature. In theology it has a technical meaning, and denotes the entrance into human nature of the divine Word. As the term for word in Greek is Logos, the doctrine of the incarnation rests upon the doctrine of the Logos; and, as that doctrine is peculiar to the prologue of John's Gospel, its exposition necessitates a special study of that part of Scripture.

Because the English equivalent of Logos is "word," the original is translated into our language by that term. Hence the first verse of the Gospel is rendered in both the Authorized and the Revised Version, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God." The term is so familiar and so expressive that there is good reason for retaining it in our discussion.

There is a doctrine of the Logos in I John 1:1, but it is quite different from that in this prologue. The word is not there personified and made the agent of creation as it is here. To speak with Dr. Samuel Davidson, "There is an approach to the personification of the abstract idea *eternal life*, an

attribute of the Father; and though this attribute is brought into close connection with the Son, it does not reach personification as the Logos does in the Gospel.”¹ So it need not be considered now.

For many centuries the interpretation of the Prologue has been disputed, and erroneous opinions are still held with respect to it. Yet, though the statement may seem surprising to some, explained in harmony with Hebrew modes of thought and forms of speech, its meaning is quite obvious. To interpret it rightly an understanding of an ancient way of thinking and speaking is required. The use of the term is very interesting.

A word is the sign of an idea, or that by which concrete thought is expressed. Both in English and in Greek the term combines the twofold notion of thought and expression. It is here used in the sense of being a manifestation of mind. As the human mind manifests itself in the spoken or written word, so the divine mind manifests itself in the inspired or unuttered word.

We see in nature manifestations of wisdom, power, and goodness. “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork,” the author of the nineteenth Psalm says. But as verse 3, literally translated, would read, “There is no speech, and there are no words; not at all is their voice heard.” Yet they bring to us messages which, though inarticulate, are very real; and we communicate the knowledge thus received

¹ *Introduction to the New Testament*, Vol. II, p. 307.

by a symbol which conveys the thought in our minds to the minds of others. In that way the inspired or unuttered word becomes the spoken or written word. In that way, too, the revealed truths of the Bible were received by men of God.

Both in Hebrew and in Greek the term for word denotes a speaking or a thing spoken, that is, a manifestation of mind, as just explained. The word of God, or a word from God, therefore, is a thing spoken inarticulately by him to the heart of man, or a manifestation of his mind to the mind of man. It is something revealed by the divine Spirit to the human soul. That is to say, it is something about the Deity which man is able to apprehend, and which he is prompted to express, as a partial revelation of the divine will.

Expressed in speech or writing, that which he apprehends becomes the revealed word of God, because it represents some aspect of his character, or some portion of his thought concerning the world. By thus manifesting himself the revealed truths of the Bible were communicated to the ancient prophets and apostles. The prophetic formula, "The word of Jehovah came," in Jeremiah 1:2, and that in Luke 3:2, "The word of God came," show how the communication was received by one who was called to the office of a prophet. In each case the phrase implies that the man in question was inspired of God, and called by him to teach and preach in his name.

Such passages prove that the word of God is that

in him which serves as his agent in the revelation of his truth. But it is also described as his active agent in the work of creation, as in Psalm 33:6, "By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made"; or as his delivering agent, as in Psalm 107:20, "He sendeth his word, and healeth them, and delivereth them from their destructions"; or as his performing agent in the processes of nature, as in Psalm 147:18, "He sendeth out his word, and melteth them (the snow and the ice)"; or as his achieving agent in dealing with mankind, as in Isaiah 55:11, where the prophet of the Exile makes him say, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

Elsewhere in the Old Testament the term is similarly, though somewhat more boldly, personified as the active representative of God. We have several instances in the eighth chapter of Proverbs, as in verse 12, "I wisdom have made prudence my dwelling"; in verse 17, "I love them that love me, and those that seek me diligently shall find me"; and in verse 23, "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." Here we have a bolder personification than that in the Gospel, because a divine attribute is made to speak and execute, as well as to act and operate.

Then wisdom is strongly personified in some of the Apocryphal books. In Ecclesiasticus 1:4 it is said to have been "created before all things"; in

verse 19 it is described as that which "raineth down skill and knowledge of understanding"; in chapter 24:3 it is represented as saying "I came out of the mouth of the Most High," and in verse 9 as saying, "He created me from the beginning before the world, and I shall never fail." Here we have wisdom set forth as the first created, or the chief attribute of God in relation to the world.

Now it will be noticed that in those Old Testament passages the word of God, or moral truth, and the wisdom of God, or moral knowledge, are viewed as one and the same thing. They are both said to have been with him from the beginning, because they are attributes of his character; and they are both said to have proceeded from him, because they are parts of his thought concerning mankind. They are that in him which acts for him and executes his will. Hence his word working or his wisdom operating is himself working or operating in the direction of his purpose.

In those passages we have the germs of the doctrine that is peculiar to the Fourth Gospel. The personification is similar in each place and the agency is the same. In his comment on Psalm 107:20, Professor Kirkpatrick remarks that such passages prepared the way for the use in the Targums of the phrase *memra Jah* (word of Jah) for Jehovah in his intercourse with his people, and also for the use of the term word in the prologue of this Gospel; but he thinks the term is here used in a personal sense, which is demonstrably not the case.

We find in the book of Wisdom a passage in which the term word is employed precisely as it is in the Prologue. In chapter 9:1, praying for wisdom to be given him, the author addresses the Eternal thus: "O God of my fathers, and Lord of mercy, who hast made all things with thy word."² This seems to have been the immediate source of the phrase in the Gospel. "By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made," in Psalm 33:6, is similar in thought to "all things were made through" the word, the expression in John 1:3; but the thought expressed in this verse is identical, for to say that God made all things with his word is the same as to say that all things were made through his word. In each case the preposition signifies by means of, and expresses instrumentality or agency.

From the foregoing examples it is plain that the word of God is that in him which acts or operates according to his purpose, revealing his truth and executing his will. It is not something separate from him, but something that is a part of him. Hence the term is used, not in a personal, but in an impersonal, sense in both the Old Testament and the New, because the thought in the book of Wisdom is absolutely the same as that in the Gospel of John. God is a person only in an infinite sense, and there cannot be two infinite beings.

The expression word of God, in whole or in part, occurs elsewhere in this Gospel, and each time it denotes the impersonal revelation of God. In

² Literally, "The one making all things with thy word."

chapter 5:38 Jesus is reported as saying, "Ye have not his word abiding in you"; and in chapter 10:35 he is made to say, "If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came (and the scripture cannot be broken), say ye of him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" In this verse we have the full phrase; and, though it is not here personified, the term is used, as in the Prologue, in an impersonal sense. And this is the uniform usage in the Scriptures.

Since this Gospel was written, different opinions have been held respecting the origin of the idea. Because Plato employs the term *Logos* to denote reason as a manifestation of the Deity, some have supposed it owes its origin to him. It cannot have originated with him, however, because the term is used by the Evangelist, not as a manifestation of reason, but as a manifestation of wisdom or knowledge, that is, of moral truth. Others have supposed it was derived from Philo, who describes the *Logos* as the thought of God, or its expression in the world, and represents it as an intermediate being between God and his creation; but that supposition, like the other, is quite incorrect, for in both the Prologue and the Apocrypha it is something in God, and not something separate from him.

Though the conception was not derived from Philo, the use of the term *Logos* in the Gospel may have been influenced by the speculations peculiar to him and his followers, because it is introduced in

the opening verse without comment or explanation, as if those addressed were familiar with that form of speech. The remark of Professor Wendt on this point is worth reproducing. "It must be recognized," he says, "that there can really be perceived in the Prologue of the Gospel some contact with that speculative religious philosophy of the Logos which was formulated by Philo, and became widely current in connection with his name."³

Others have supposed the idea was suggested by the expression *Memra Jah* (word of Jah), which was in common use among Jews and Christians in the first century of our era, and occurs with frequency in the Targums, or Aramaic paraphrases of the Old Testament. But there is no ground for that supposition either. The idea was suggested by the ancient Scriptures, and the author of the Prologue borrowed it directly from the book of Wisdom from which he appropriated other ideas as well. Adapting it to his purpose in an original way, he speaks there of the word of God as the self-manifesting activity of God in the world, and especially in human life, that is, as the impersonal revelation of moral and religious truth.

Being a divine attribute figuratively endowed with personality, we should think and speak of the word as it, and not as he or him; and the figurative use of the term should appear in the translation. The masculine gender is given in our English versions, partly because of misconception, and partly

³ *St. John's Gospel*, p. 224.

because the term in Greek is masculine. Had the Greek term wisdom been employed, we might use she or her, as the translators of the Bible have sometimes done; but, word being neuter in our language, we should think and speak of it as a neuter noun, and by so doing let the reader see that it is used impersonally.

Having taught students to do this before seeing his book, the present writer was pleased to find, after his work on the Fourth Gospel appeared in English, that Professor Wendt not only defines the Logos as the impersonal revelation of God, but also employs a neuter pronoun in referring to it. Though he does not suggest that this pronoun should stand in the text of the Bible, he prints the form four times in one short sentence. "We are told," he says, "that *it* came into the world (verse 9), that to those who received *it* *it* gave the right to become children of God (verse 12), that *it* tabernacled among men (verse 14)."⁴ In this way he indicates that the term is used in an impersonal sense.

So generally has its impersonal use in the Gospel been overlooked that a new interpretation of the Prologue must be given. To do this clearly the term will be spelled with a small initial letter, as it is in chapters 5:38 and 10:35, and as wisdom is in the eighth chapter of Proverbs; and a neuter pronoun will be substituted for the masculine. Then the paragraph will be divided into different parts so as to evince the sequence of ideas, and each part will

⁴ *St. John's Gospel*, p. 233.

be explained in accordance with what seems to be its true historic meaning.

This introductory paragraph contains eighteen verses, the first two of which affirm the eternity of the word: "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God."

The beginning in this verse is not the creation of the world, as in Genesis 1:1, but the period prior to that creation. The period is the same as that in which wisdom is said in Proverbs 8:23 to have been with God, namely, from everlasting; and both were with him in the same sense. Both word and wisdom were with him, not as something distinct from him, but as that in him which reveals his truth and accomplishes his design.

Preëxistence is taught here, as it is in Proverbs, but it is the preëxistence of a divine attribute; for nothing could be always with God but that which belongs to him, and is a part of him. Because the term for God at the end of the first verse is without the article, some have thought the clause should be rendered "the word was a God"; and the Arians, who held that the word was a being or an essence inferior to God, so rendered it. But those who have thought that failed to see that the reference there is not to a person nor to an essence, but to an attribute. The word was God in the sense of being that in him which acts or operates for him.

The next three verses describe the nature and activity of the word: "All things were made through

it; and without it was not anything made that hath been made. In it was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness overcame it not."

Here its nature is described as that in God which creates, or that which brings into being everything that exists. The thought is identical with that in the book of Wisdom 9:1: "Who hast made all things with thy word"; for, as stated earlier, to say that God made all things with his word is the same as to say that all things were made through his word. In each passage agency or instrumentality is expressed. There is no suggestion of a separate person acting, or of anything distinct from God operating, in either of them. The thought is similar to that in Psalm 33:9: "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." There is no personification in that passage, but it means, as each of the others means, that God made all things by his word of command. Every form of existence came into being through him and through him alone.

In the fourth verse the writer says that in the word was life, life in its widest and fullest sense, and that the life of which it is the possessor was the light of men. In its relation to mankind, or in its working on human nature, this life is mental and moral as well as physical; and, when it quickens human beings morally, it inwardly enlightens them. The revealing word is here said to illumine men, as the inspired word is said to do in Psalm 119:105: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto

my path." In the fifth verse we are told that the light from the word kept shining during the centuries in the darkness of human ignorance and error, and that the darkness was not able to overpower it. Nothing could suppress it, or prevent its illuminating activity, because it was the self-manifesting activity of God himself.

At this point the Evangelist commences his narrative and approaches his main thesis. In verses 6-8 he introduces John the Baptist as a witness-bearer of the light that proceeded, not from the word directly, but from a being not hitherto mentioned: "There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for witness, that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came that he might bear witness of the light."

John is now introduced as the connecting link between the old and the new dispensation to testify concerning one whose forerunner he was, and who is styled in chapter 8:12 "the light of the world," in order that all might believe that he was the light of men in a unique sense. It was necessary for the writer to state, as he does in verse 8, that John, though he was the great spiritual luminary of his day, was not the light, because, when he began his ministry, some took him for the Messiah that was expected to come.

After this historical statement, the Evangelist gives an account in verses 9-13 of the true light which had appeared, but which had not been gen-

erally recognized by the people of the time: "The true light, which lighteth every man, was coming into the world. It was in the world, and the world was made by it, and the world knew it not. It came unto its own (people), and they that were its own received it not. But as many as received it, to them gave it the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

The true light here was, as Meyer remarks, neither John nor any other, but the true, genuine, archetypal light, corresponding to the idea of the light realized. The light from the word was always in the world, because the world was made by the word, as the writer has said in verse 3; but the true light of which he now goes on to speak is the light which, mediated through Jesus, created those anew who welcomed it and walked in it. It must be remembered that the light was in the world in the person of Jesus when John was bearing witness; and that the light which he shed, or the truth which he taught, came unto his own people, the Jews, and that most of them rejected it. But to all, whether Jews or Gentiles, who received it by believing in God, it gave the right to become, or the privilege of becoming, conscious children of God.

It will be observed that the pronouns in these verses refer to the word and its activity, and are still neuter, as Meyer and Weiss both admit. Meyer thinks, however, that in the tenth verse the neuter

passes into the masculine, because the object which was not recognized was the personal manifestation of the Logos; but the reference seems to be to the light that was mediated through Jesus rather than to Jesus himself.

In the next five verses the Evangelist tells how Jesus was made the mediator of the true light: "And the word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld its glory, glory as of an only begotten from a father, full of grace and truth. John beareth witness of him, and crieth, saying, This was he of whom I said, He that cometh after me is become before me, for He was first in regard of me. For of His fulness we all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared (or revealed) him."

Hitherto the writer has referred to the activity of the word and to the testimony of John to the light that proceeded from it directly or that was mediated through Jesus. Now after stating that the word became incarnate in him, he refers to the divine glory which belongs to it; for, as Dr. Bernhard Weiss observes, "Nothing other than the primeval divine glory is here meant."⁵ And the word is here called an only begotten, as wisdom is called an only begotten in the book of Wisdom (chapter 7:22), because it is the supreme divine attribute. Hence

⁵ Revised German edition of Meyer.

the pronoun in verse 14 is still neuter, and is properly translated "its." The word, full of grace and truth, became flesh, that is, embodied in a man, who dwelt among his fellow men, and manifested the character of the Father to them.

Let the reader bear in mind that throughout the Prologue the word is always the impersonal revelation of God, or that in him which so expresses his mind and reveals his truth that it can be incorporated with human nature. This word was so embodied in Jesus as to fill him with grace and truth, or, as the terms should be translated, kindness and faithfulness. They express divine attributes, not doctrinal ideas; and the writer teaches that Jesus was filled with these communicable attributes of God. The original combination occurs with frequency in the Old Testament, and Professor Delitzsch rightly employs it to render the phrase in his Hebrew translation of the New Testament. An only begotten is an only one of its kind, and in this connection the epithet, as applied to Jesus, denotes one unique in nature or supreme in character.

At verse 15 John is again introduced, but this time as bearing witness to Jesus, not as the mediator of the true light, but as the incarnation of the divine word; and who, though his predecessor in office, was his inferior in importance. The perfect tense in "is become before me" points to dignity rather than to time, as Dr. Plummer remarks, and is equivalent to "is superior to me"; and the last clause,

"for he was first in regard to me," expresses the same thought. This verse teaches superiority of rank, and not priority of existence, because the priority of Jesus is not true, and his personal preëxistence is not taught. That Jesus was superior to John in dignity and rank is what the author meant. Each expression must refer to rank, and not to time, for the further reason that the statement was put into the mouth of John long after Jesus died, and there is no hint in the Synoptic Gospels that he ever heard of the idea of a preëxistent Messiah.⁶

Having stated that it was his fulness of the divine attributes that made Jesus superior in dignity and rank, the writer says in verse 16 that out of the fulness whereof he was filled, or out of the fulness which made him unique, we all received, and grace for grace; which shows that the goodness of all regenerated men is the same in kind as his, because their possession of divine qualities comes from the same infinite source. In verse 17 the writer draws a distinction between the Old dispensation and the New. The law was given through Moses, but kindness and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ, he says. Moses told what God was; Jesus showed what he is. The former described his character; the latter manifested it.

Finally, in verse 18 the author says that no man has ever seen God, but that the only begotten Son,

⁶ If, as Meyer thinks, "He was first in regard of me" refers to time, "we must not force in the idea of absolute priority," as he is careful to add.

which is in the bosom of the Father, or in a loving relation to the Father, has revealed him. As this Gospel was written long after Jesus was crucified, the expression, "in the bosom of the Father," refers to his present state of exaltation; and the assertion, "he hath declared (or revealed) him," refers to his prophetic activity while on the earth.

Failing to get the viewpoint of the Evangelist, traditional interpreters have thought he was dealing with a person when explaining the activity of the word, whereas he was dealing with a personification. The language is personal, of course, but not so personal as that in the eighth chapter of Proverbs, where wisdom is made to speak as well as act.

In the Prologue the word is regarded as that in God which creates and illumines. With respect to the world it is creative, with respect to mankind it is illuminative, as Meyer says; and Jesus is regarded as the embodiment of the creative and illuminative word. Jesus is not there said to have existed prior to his birth, but that which became embodied in him is said to have preëxisted.

In other parts of the book, however, Jesus is made to speak of having preëxisted in a certain sense. There are several examples. One occurs in chapter 3:13: "No man hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven." A second occurs in chapter 6:46: "Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is from God, he hath seen the Father." A third occurs in chapter 8:42: "I came forth and am

come from God; for neither have I come of myself, but he sent me." A fourth occurs in chapter 8:58: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am." A fifth is found in chapter 16:27: "The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came forth from the Father"; and a sixth is found in chapter 17:5: "Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

That which descended from heaven, which came forth from God, which had seen the Father, which was before Abraham, was that in God which made him the spiritual Christ of God; for, as chapter 17:5 shows, the Evangelist meant that Jesus preëxisted only as glory, or that in Deity which can manifest his character and make him truly known. This is what Meyer calls *λόγος ἄσαρκος*, the fleshless or eternal word, and describes his prehuman or premundane state. The glory which he is said to have had before the creation of the world, and to which he is said to have returned, was not that which made him a man, but that which made him the man he was. He is said to have preëxisted, therefore, not as a person, nor as an essence, but as divine glory.

What has just been stated is so important that it seems advisable here to deal with two serious misconceptions. From the idea of preëxistence expressed in this Gospel theologians have held that the word existed forever as something separate from God. In his comment on the first verse, for instance,

Dr. Plummer says that "the Logos existed from all eternity, distinct from the Father, and equal to the Father." But that assertion is quite contrary to the teaching of the Evangelist. He knew that nothing eternal could exist apart from the infinite God, and employed an ancient mode of thought to express the relation to him of that in his nature which creates and illumines.

From the idea of divine Sonship expressed in the Prologue and elsewhere theologians have developed the doctrine of eternal generation. But that doctrine is as contrary to the teaching of the Evangelist as the other is. The eternal Sonship he taught is the eternal existence of that in God which, like wisdom in the Apocrypha (Wisdom 7:22), is styled an only begotten. Hence the preëxistent Son and the preëxistent word represent an agency or an attribute of God. The former may be viewed as that in him which reveals his truth, the latter as that which manifests his character.

Everyone should now see that, when the Evangelist said the word became flesh, he meant that the eternal word became a human being, and that the being he had in mind was Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus was not the God-man, as so many have claimed, but the God-filled man. Hence he was not the eternal, but the incarnate, word. The doctrine of the Prologue is not the assumption of human nature by the word, but the entrance of the word into human nature in a unique degree. That is a process which had been going on for ages before Jesus ap-

peared. There had been an eternal becoming of the word, the light from it growing clearer and fuller from age to age. Prior to his appearance God revealed himself to all inspired men through his word, but he revealed himself uniquely through Jesus, because he manifested the divine character in life and conduct. So the incarnation of Jesus was a fullness of God which made him the unique manifestation of his communicable attributes. He manifested all of God that could be manifested in human character.

Let it be noted now that Jesus was not the word and that the word was not Jesus, but that Jesus was the one in whom the word was incarnated in the fullest possible degree. Neither is he ever styled "the word" in Scripture. Speaking of his spirit in the other world, Revelation 19:13 says, "His name is called the Word of God"; but nowhere in the New Testament is the historical Jesus so designated.⁷ And the title is there applied to him as other divine titles are applied to him in the Apocalypse, not because they had an original reference to him, but as they could be officially used of his spirit after it was unified with the divine Spirit. Such titles are applied on the principle of the spiritual oneness of the Father and the Son.

Most theologians have identified the human Jesus with the divine word, but in the Scriptures they are everywhere kept separate. Overlooking that fact,

⁷ See confirmatory note by Dr. Weiss in his Revised German edition of Meyer, p. 51.

such men have led the Church astray by teaching that Jesus had a preëxistence, whereas the Prologue teaches that it was the word which preëxisted, and that it was the preëxistent word incarnated in Jesus which made him what he was. That is to say, it was the unique embodiment of the word in Jesus which made him the spiritual Christ of God, just as it was the lesser embodiment of the word in the Apostles which made them Christlike men. And it is a similar embodiment of the word in his disciples to-day which makes them true Christians. The law of the Spirit is the same for all men, and the embodiment of the word is the same in kind in every good man.

First John 1:1 gives a Scriptural account of the relation between Jesus and the word which proves the foregoing explanation to be correct. Speaking of his historic appearance, the Apostle describes him as "That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life." That which was from the beginning is the eternal word, as in the Prologue of the Gospel. The phrase refers not to the person of Jesus, but to his "deepest being," as Dr. Bernhard Weiss says in his explanatory note; and that which was seen and heard, or beheld and handled, is Jesus himself in whom the eternal word became embodied.

This verse affords conclusive testimony on the point. The Apostle, like the Evangelist, viewed Jesus not as the eternal, but as the incarnate word,

or that in God which reveals spiritual truth and inspires spiritual life. He is here called the word of life, because both the Apostle and the Evangelist regarded him not only as the manifestation of the Father, but also as the mediator of eternal life. The eternal word was always in the world, and it inspired life in those who received and practiced the truth as it was revealed to them; but the life mediated through the incarnate word gives men a richer experience of God, and enables them to obtain a fuller portion of his Spirit and a larger measure of his grace.

Because incarnation is not the assumption of human nature by the word, but the entrance of the word into human nature, it is not an isolated experience or a solitary event, nor one that is limited to a single person. That is to say, it is not something that took place once for all in Jesus, but something that is taking place all the time. The word becoming incarnate is God becoming incarnate to that extent. Ever since man was able to apprehend his will and receive his truth God has been incarnating himself in human nature.

Christianity is distinctively the religion of incarnation, because the essence of the doctrine is the consciousness of God dwelling in the heart, directing the individual, and dominating the life. While Jesus was the Son of God in a preëminent sense, as the Evangelist teaches, his followers are sons of God in the same spiritual sense. The Prologue states that, to as many as received the word, it gave the

right to become children of God; and Romans 8:14 declares that "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God." God never does anything in particular in any sense other than that in which he does everything in general, to appropriate a sentence from Dr. Temple, Bishop of Manchester, England.

He incarnated himself uniquely in Jesus by taking complete possession of him, but he incarnates himself partially in all good men. The uniqueness of Jesus was owing to spiritual, not to biological, qualities. The life which energized him and the light which radiated from him came from the same divine source as that from which our life and our light come. The added something that made him different from us was his fulness of the Spirit. "God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him," I John 4:16 says. All human piety is the same in kind, because all divine love and all divine indwelling are the same in kind. They are qualitatively, but not quantitatively, the same.

CHAPTER VI

THE RELIGION

For a long time scholars have spoken of the Christian religion and the religion of Jesus as more or less dissimilar things. Many have called attention to certain differences between them, but have not adequately shown either what they are or how they arose. The object of this chapter is to discuss these differences with respect especially to the soteriology of Jesus, or his doctrine of salvation.

Our knowledge of what Jesus taught must be derived from the first three Gospels, because the Fourth has a much later form, and evinces a dogmatic rather than a historic purpose. Each of the Synoptists wrote from a slightly different point of view and for a somewhat different class of men. Each of them, too, adapted his message to the requirements of the readers, and modified it to suit his own particular aim. Those facts, which account in part for the divergencies, make it easier for us to distinguish what Jesus said from what the Evangelist wrote.

So far as the records show, his teaching was characteristically Jewish. That is what we should, for obvious reasons, naturally expect. Having been born

and bred a Jew, and having remained a member of the Jewish Church, his whole background was Jewish. He was not only reared in a Jewish family, but also nurtured on the Jewish Scriptures. He studied them as a child; he taught them as a man; he read them in the synagogue after beginning his public ministry; he explained them to his hearers as the occasion gave him opportunity.

His distinctive doctrines have their roots in the Old Testament, and the germs of everything essential that he taught are to be found there. The principal phrases of the Lord's Prayer are of Jewish origin. Of the seven petitions, reckoning "Hallowed be Thy name" as the first and "Deliver us from evil" as the last, all, or nearly all, occur in one form or another in Jewish liturgies; and the Beatitudes are drawn directly from the Psalter and the book of Proverbs.

Expressed concisely, his teaching may be styled religious morality, or morality based on belief in God and devotion to his will. He approved of religion only as it manifested itself in moral action; and he summed up, after Micah, the practical requirements of religion in the three great moral duties—judgment, mercy, and faith. He insisted on righteousness, not ritual; on mercy, not sacrifice; on inward obedience, not outward offering of any kind. The Sermon on the Mount, which contains his manifesto, or the program of his principles, enforces moral precepts from beginning to end; and the Golden Rule—"Whatsoever ye would that men

should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them"—is rightly regarded as the foundation of social morality.

His soteriology must be specially considered, however, because it is the feature of his teaching which differs most from that of the Apostles. Several ideas are included in the doctrine of salvation, each of which is suggested by the source from which the term is derived. In English to be saved is to be secure or safe; in Greek it is to be kept or preserved; in Hebrew it is to be rescued or delivered. In the first the idea is that of security, in the second that of preservation, in the third that of deliverance. The idea of safety or freedom from danger is common to all three languages. Salvation is thus a state of welfare, particularly of moral and spiritual well-being.

The Greek word for salvation occurs six times in the Synoptic Gospels, and each time in the Gospel according to Luke. In chapter 1:68-71 he represents Zacharias as saying in reference to one about to be born, "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; for he hath visited and wrought redemption for his people, and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David (as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets which have been since the world began), salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us." Since a horn of salvation is a means of salvation, the coming one is here set forth as an instrument of rescue, or a rescue-bringing agent, to deliver the Jewish people from

the power of their enemies. The salvation described is national, not personal. The term has a purely Old Testament content in this passage, and expresses not the teaching of Jesus, but that of those who thought of the coming one as a temporal deliverer.

In verses 76, 77 John the Baptist is pictured as an infant prophet who should "go before the face of the Lord to make ready his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people in the remission of their sins." These are still the words of Zacharias, and the salvation described is still national rather than personal. According to this passage, salvation consists not simply in deliverance from enemies, but in the remission of sins. The idea is similar to that in Isaiah 55:7: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto Jehovah, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." The Evangelist, like the prophet, connected salvation with repenting of sin and turning to God. In both the Gospel and the prophecy the condition of entering the kingdom and of enjoying the favor of God is the same.

In chapter 2:29-32 Simeon is made to say, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart, O Lord, according to thy word, in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples; a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." Here Jesus is pictured as an infant prophet, who should be a

means of salvation to both Jews and Gentiles; and the salvation described is, as before, national rather than personal. In this passage language is applied to him that was originally used in Isaiah 42:6 and 49:6 of the godly Israelites in captivity, who were styled the Servant of Jehovah, because they were regarded as a prophetic people, chosen to be the bearers of a divine message to mankind.

The term occurs again in chapter 3:6: "All flesh shall see the salvation of God." These words are quoted from the Greek version of Isaiah 40:5, where they refer to the divine glory that was to be revealed in the deliverance of Israel from captivity. They are applied to John the Baptist because, as the forerunner of Jesus, he prepared the way for a revelation of God, or a saving knowledge of his truth, that should be for all the world. In this verse also the salvation described is national rather than personal, and Gentiles as well as Jews are assured of sharing in its benefits.

Thus far we have studied, not what Jesus said about salvation, but what others said about it; and the reference in each case is more to the community than to the individual. Both Zacharias and Simeon allude to Messianic salvation, or national deliverance through the coming of one who was expected to rescue the Israelites from their enemies and restore them to power and prosperity. That the deliverance they expected was primarily national and political is proved by the utterance concerning the crucified Jesus recorded in Luke 24:21: "We

hoped that it was he which should redeem Israel." Redemption from the yoke of Rome is there meant, of course. The idea is identical with that in chapter 1:68-71, except that what is here said of Jesus is there said of God who raised him up.

Now we come to something Jesus is reported to have said himself, but Luke is the only writer that records it. In chapter 19:9 the Evangelist represents him as saying with regard to the family of Zacchaeus, "To-day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham." Though, from his occupation, he may have appeared unworthy to be considered a good son of his great progenitor, yet by his expression of penitence, his offer of restitution, and his bestowments to the poor, Zacchaeus proved himself to be a regenerated Israelite. He gave the fullest evidence of a changed state of heart.

That is the one passage in the Synoptic Gospels where Jesus is reported to have used the term. Though the Synoptists do not report him as using it again, they represent him as saying a good deal about saving men and about the way in which men are saved. So we must now look for what he taught concerning those whom he sought to save.

The next verse—"The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost"—gives us the information in part. Since the adjective is applied to the household of Zacchaeus, it is manifestly used with a collective meaning. It is a collective neuter, and should be translated those which were lost. And

who were they? Why, chiefly Israelites, as is shown by the context. It is proved also by Matthew 15:24, where Jesus says, "I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel"; and likewise by Matthew 10:6, where he charges the Twelve Apostles not to go to the Gentiles nor to the Samaritans, but "rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

In what sense were those Israelites lost? They were lost in ignorance, especially ignorance of God, from whose ways they had wandered into sin and vice. They belonged to the class described in Matthew 9:36, those erring ones for whom Jesus was moved with compassion, "because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd." In Palestine at that time there were multitudes of misguided men and women, some of them abandoned wretches, for whose welfare no man cared. Neglected by the pastors and despised by the rulers, they were morally untaught and spiritually unfed. On that account they were degraded and depraved, and so lost to the true aim of life.

On what ground did Jesus seek to save those straying multitudes? Each of the Synoptists answers that question, but Luke gives the answer in the fullest form. In chapter 5:32 he reports Jesus as saying, "I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." The last two words are of doubtful authority in Matthew 9:13 and in Mark 2:17, but their presence here is undisputed. These two words furnish the key to his view of salvation.

The Greek for repentance signifies a change of mind, and by implication a change of heart. He came to rescue human beings from the bondage of sin. Regarding it as a moral malady, he endeavored to bring them from a diseased moral condition to a healthy state of soul.

He came not to deliver his people from the power of their enemies, as Zacharias expected, nor to redeem them from subjection to the Romans, as Cleopas and his companion hoped. His object was personal and spiritual, not national or political. It was not national restoration, but personal regeneration, that he tried to effect. He sought for sinners, those who were morally diseased, and endeavored to save them by converting them from the error of their ways.

That statement brings us to the heart of the subject. How or by what means did he seek to save men? Mark and Matthew both give the answer, but that by Mark is earlier and more complete. In chapter 1:14, 15 he says, "After that John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe in the Gospel." According to this passage, to be saved is to enter the kingdom by repenting of sin and believing in the Gospel. Since to believe in the Gospel is to accept its truths and practice its precepts, the condition of salvation is twofold, namely, repentance and faith.

Before we consider this twofold condition the

reader should notice that Jesus began his public ministry as John the Baptist began his, with the same message and in the same form. Mark 1:4 tells us that John "preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins," and so does Luke 3:3; Matthew 3:2 represents him as saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," and chapter 4:17 reports Jesus as having used those very words.

In each case to be saved is to enter the kingdom; in each case salvation is through remission of sins; in each case repentance is the preliminary condition, and in each case the permanent condition is faith, for the one enables God to forgive and the other keeps us truly obedient. But John preached the baptism of repentance, whereas Jesus preached the Gospel of God. Though Mark is the only one that mentions the difference, John informs us that Jesus himself did not baptize.

Let us now examine the five terms—God, kingdom, sin, repentance, faith—to ascertain how he understood them in connection with this doctrine.

As a student of the Old Testament, Jesus was taught to regard God as a great moral Being, merciful and gracious, and abundant in kindness and faithfulness, one who has not only an interest in mankind, but also a desire that all men should turn to him and be saved; in short, as Isaiah 45:21 describes him, one who is a righteous God and a Savior, besides whom there is none else.

Matthew 5:45 shows that he regarded him as a loving heavenly Father, impartial as well as benevo-

lent, who makes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust. To Jesus, therefore, God was the Savior, and he was the instrument for bringing men to repentance. To him the ground of salvation was in the character of God, because forgiveness and graciousness are two of his attributes.

The word Savior occurs but twice in the Synoptic Gospels—once in Luke 1:47 and once in Luke 2:11. In the former Mary is represented as saying, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour"; and in the latter an angel says to the shepherds, "There is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

In the first of these verses Lord refers to God, the omnipotent Lord; in the second it refers to Jesus, the anointed Lord, as the margin of the New Revision renders the last clause. The title is often used of Jehovah in the Old Testament, but it was not applied to Jesus as a spiritual Lord during the days of his flesh. Its application to him is confined to the later writings, as Westcott has remarked, and as other critical students have observed. He presented himself to men as a teacher, and not as a redeemer or savior.

Throughout the Scriptures Jehovah is viewed as the almighty Savior, or the Lord God; and in the New Testament Jesus is viewed as the anointed Savior, or the anointed Lord. According to Matthew 1:21, Joseph is directed to call his name Jesus,

which means deliverer or Savior, because he should save his people from their sins. As the anointed Savior, Jesus saved men from their sins by getting them to enter the kingdom through repentance and faith; or, in short, by getting them right with God.

How did he conceive of the kingdom of which he so often spoke? As he used the term, it means a reign or rule more than a state or sphere. With him it meant the reign of God in the lives of men, or his spiritual rule over those who submit to him and devote themselves to his will. It was a special reign of God in society that Jesus had in mind. He looked for a divine dominion over men in a fuller degree, and among them on a larger scale, than ever before; and, though it took time to get some of his truths appreciated, what he expected has actually come to pass.

The nature of this dominion is suggested in the Sermon on the Mount. Speaking of the provision God has made for all our needs, he says in Matthew 6:33, "Seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." That exhortation shows that his dominion over us rests not on our acknowledgment of his supremacy, but on our personal submission to his sway. His kingdom is composed of free moral agents, and the essential requirement of each member is righteousness, righteousness that results from voluntary obedience to his laws or voluntary devotion to his will. We must seek to become his subjects, therefore, by

placing ourselves at his disposal and bringing ourselves under his rule.

From the parables recorded in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew, all of which have reference to the kingdom, it is plain that Jesus expected a long season of sowing, and a long period of development, before the time of full fruition would arrive. Its consummation, he saw clearly, would be in the distant future. But, while recognizing that its consummation was far in the future, he believed it would be gradually extended and progressively established till it should compass the whole earth.

What he is reported to have said about it elsewhere shows that, as it meant a spiritual dominion, its extension would be quiet, like the spread of leaven, and its progress slow, like the growth of a tree. He was quite aware that there would be opposition and antagonism, as well as indifference and dislike, toward those who proclaimed his Gospel. He was aware, too, of the hardships to be endured and the difficulties to be encountered by them; but he knew the divinity of his message, and had no doubt that in due time it would receive world-wide acceptance.

Through the practice of his precepts and the application of his principles he looked for a new state of things to arise, or a new order to be established. The kingdom of God would more and more fully come as his will was more and more widely done till it brought in a new age—an age when truth would expel error and right would conquer

wrong, and an age when kindness and equity would take the place of cruelty and iniquity. In the consummation of the kingdom he saw a new society in which benevolence was real and righteousness regnant; a new order in which peace was general and good-will universal; a new world in which communities as well as individuals would do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.

Sin was viewed by Jesus in a deeper way than by any of his predecessors. He employed the same terms that they employed, but gave a more spiritual meaning to them. The one he used most frequently denotes a failure to do what is prescribed by law or dictated by conscience, but he sometimes used another, often translated "trespass," which denotes a lapse of conduct resulting from ignorance or inadvertence. Though the latter is more commonly applicable to minor offenses, when an offense is wilful, it assumes a moral character, and becomes a sinful act, because in the moral sense sin is the conscious transgression of known law.

In the Old Testament sin is regarded as being against God. Reproved by Nathan for his adultery, David is reported in II Samuel 12:13 as saying, "I have sinned against Jehovah"; and Psalm 51:4 makes the Israelitish nation say, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned." In its ultimate nature all sin is against God, because it is against his will, and not only violates his law, but also alters our relation to him. "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from

you, that he will not hear," the author of Isaiah 59:2 tells the captive Israelites. And that teaching is as important now as it was then. Sin separates from God, interrupts communion with him, and deprives the wrong-doer of his favor.

Jesus developed the doctrine by showing that practically sin is against man. It harms the one who commits it and the one against whom it is committed. But it harms the one who commits it more than anyone else, so that primarily sin is against conscience, and violates the law of right and wrong in the soul. Previously to his time men in general thought of sin as the outward act of wrong-doing; but, knowing that an act takes place in the heart before it comes forth into visible manifestation in life, he taught that the very desire to do wrong is a sin, whether the outward act be committed or not.

Hence he declares in Matthew 15:19, "Out of the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, railing." A wrong thought prompts to a wrong action, and a wrong desire may lead to a wrong deed. An evil thought, therefore, accompanied with a corresponding wish to do evil, is a sin. A man is a murderer or an adulterer in heart before he becomes a murderer or an adulterer in deed. If people appreciated the truth of that fact as they should, there would be less iniquity and crime in the world.

Repentance signifies in English a feeling of sorrow or an expression of regret for doing something amiss; but in Greek it signifies an afterthought, or

a change of mind resulting from reflection. In the one case it is a way of feeling, in the other it is a way of thinking; but in each case it is a changed state of soul that leads to a changed manner of life. It is a change that shows itself in character and conduct. With Jesus, as with John the Baptist, repentance was "unto remission of sins," that is, in order to their forgiveness, through turning from sin to God.

With Jesus, as with John, too, God only can forgive sin. The fifth petition in the Lord's Prayer makes that plain. But remission of sins is conditioned on repentance, because man must turn from sin to righteousness before he can be forgiven. Since a deed once done cannot always be undone, what happens to an evil-doer when he turns from sin and seeks divine forgiveness? The author of Psalm 32:5 gives the Scriptural answer, and the one that Jesus might have given. When the speaker acknowledged his transgression, Jehovah forgave the iniquity of his sin, he says. As iniquity there denotes guilt, and should be so translated, he means that God forgave his guilt.

Every sin incurs guilt and entails penalty, and is followed by evil consequences. That which God does in forgiveness is to pardon the guilt of the transgressor, and give him another chance. He helps him also to annul the penalty and overcome the evil consequences, so far as that may be possible, though it must be borne in mind that, as some deeds cannot be undone, some consequences cannot

be overcome. Thus, by repairing the relationship, repentance removes the divine resentment, and enables God to restore the sinner to favor and fellowship.

Faith in Greek is derived from a verb which means first to advise, then to persuade, and then to succeed in persuading. Because to be advised or persuaded is to believe what is told and do as one is counseled, the word came to signify obey, and obedience is the fundamental meaning of faith in the New Testament.

The truth of this statement is shown by the use of the verb in Acts 5:36, where it is recorded that as many as "obeyed" Theudas, that is, believed and followed him in his insurrection, were dispersed and brought to nought. It is shown also by the fact that the negative of this verb means to disbelieve or be disobedient, as in I Peter 2:7 and Hebrews 3:18, and by the additional fact that the adjective formed from the negative verb denotes a disbelieving or disobedient person, as in Titus 1:16 and 3:3.

Since faith supposes obedience, it means much more than mere belief. It is rather belief plus action, or acting in accordance with what we believe. It always implies activity toward an object; and, as the object of religious faith is God, it is active belief in him demonstrated by personal devotion to him. Because faith in God is devotion to God, it consists in doing more than in believing. We must believe that he is, of course, and that he both hears and helps us when we come to him; but true faith

is making use of belief, or letting what we believe do something for us. Hence faith is not so much strong or weak as active or inactive; and instead of praying, "Lord, increase our faith," most people need to pray, "Lord, improve our faith."

Faith has been called the positive counterpart of repentance, but it is not so much the positive counterpart as the practical proof. Zacchaeus showed that he had experienced an inward change by offering to distribute his ill-gotten gains and by making restitution to those he had wronged. In other words, he proved his change of heart by his change of conduct. Having witnessed those proofs of repentance, Jesus pronounced him a saved man. He did not ask Zacchaeus to believe anything about himself, for they both knew that God is good and ready to forgive, and that there is forgiveness with him for all who truly seek it.

Nor did he ask any man to believe anything about himself in order to be forgiven and accepted of God. It is unscriptural to say, as so many have said, that Jesus found no salvation for men except in so far as they were united by faith to himself. He exhorted men to believe in the Gospel and to have faith in God, for faith in God is all that is needed to be spiritually saved. His doctrine of salvation was theocentric. In the Gospel he proclaimed that God is both the author of salvation and the object of faith, and the kingdom of God is composed of those who become his subjects by voluntary obedience to his laws. To Jesus, therefore, religion was not so

much something to be believed as something to be performed.

Young children, being free from guilt, belong to his kingdom at birth; and they become conscious members when they are quickened by his Spirit to consecrate themselves to his service, as those who have wandered from his ways are restored to his favor through an inward change of heart and an outward change of life. Hence the condition of conscious membership is regeneration, and the proof of such membership is righteousness. Evangelical salvation is deliverance from the guilt and power of sin through union and communion with God, and consequent membership in the kingdom of heaven.

As Jesus did not ask men to believe anything about himself in order to be saved, so he did not ask them to believe anything in order to enter his discipleship. "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me," Matthew 16:24 reports Jesus as saying to his listeners; and to those Jews who had believed on him John 8:31 represents him as saying, "If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples." To abide in his teaching so that it becomes the condition of the life is to be a true disciple, and to be a true disciple in that sense is to be saved from conscious or intentional sin.

One more feature of his soteriology may be mentioned. To be a true disciple is not simply to be saved from sin, but to have eternal life. To the young man who came inquiring how to obtain it

Matthew 19:17 reports Jesus as saying, "If thou wouldest enter into life, keep the commandments." That answer teaches two things—first, that eternal life is not a future inheritance, but a present possession; and second, that true discipleship depends not on the acceptance of religious doctrine, but on the observance of moral law. He required no creedal subscription and presented no intellectual test, but everywhere emphasized obedience to God and devotion to his will.

Sufficient has been said to show that the religion of Jesus was that of the canonical prophets, deepened and developed. He developed Judaism by making it more spiritual and more personal. In the Old Testament salvation never denotes an exclusively spiritual state, its highest meaning there being material deliverance accompanied with temporal prosperity and attended with spiritual blessings. In the teaching of Jesus, on the other hand, it means personal deliverance from sin and conscious possession of eternal life.

Stated more at length, his doctrine of salvation was that of Judaism expanded and spiritualized. Jesus expanded Judaism by adding much of importance to what the prophets taught. According to Luke 18:29, 30, he told Peter in the presence of his fellow apostles, "There is no man that hath left house, or wife, or brethren, or parents, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this time, and in the age to come eternal life."

Jesus spiritualized Judaism by freeing religion from formality, or from the observance of outward rights and ceremonies, and by giving a richer content to the term righteousness. According to Matthew 9:13, he told the Pharisees to go and learn what this means: "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice"; and according to Matthew 5:20, he said to a crowd of listeners, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." His words imply that their righteousness must exceed that of those degenerate Jews in principle and practice, as well as in spiritual significance.

In this connection it should be observed that Jesus said nothing of saving the soul in the sense of merely getting to heaven at death, for heaven is not so much a place as a state. He thought more of holiness here than of happiness hereafter, and he spoke more of saving the life than of saving the soul in that narrow sense. In harmony with its Old Testament use he taught that the soul is the life in the sense of being the real or true self. The word in Greek means literally breath, then it comes to mean a concrete principle of vitality, and afterwards a concrete principle of personality.

He sought to save the personality or the whole man—body, soul, and spirit—here and now. To be saved, according to his teaching, is to deny ourselves, and to follow him in purpose and spirit; and to be completely saved is to render service, as well as to deny self. "Whosoever would save his life shall

lose it," he says in Mark 8:35; "and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it." Taking the term in the original to mean the real or true self, as it may be taken, we might translate the verse as the makers of the primary Geneva version of 1557 translated it, "Whosoever will save himself shall lose himself; but whosoever shall lose himself for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save himself."

This passage teaches that we are saved to serve, and suggests that we cannot realize ourselves completely unless we think of others and labor for their welfare. The full realization of self is possible only through disinterested benevolence, and it is only the realized self that lives in the highest sense of the word. Jesus expressed the doctrine of immortality, it should be added, in terms of eternal life, which is not a quantity, but a quality, of life. Literally it signifies age-long life, or the life which belongs to eternity, and which endures because of its quality of righteousness. Hence, to paraphrase the words of Webster and Wilkinson, it is the highest kind and state of being of which the creature is capable.

Were he living to-day, Jesus would reject the narrow notion of saving the soul in the form that it assumed after his departure, and which has been current ever since among Christian people. So great is the difference between his teaching and that of the Church on the subject that the present writer has long advised his friends to change such lines as "A never-dying soul to save, and fit it for the sky," so

that they might read, "An all-important life to save, a soul to sanctify," for Jesus aimed at saving the life and sanctifying the soul.

Since it is by losing ourselves that we find ourselves, we must be saved from self to service, as well as from sin to holiness. God deals with men as they are, and he saves them more or less completely in proportion as they conquer self and renounce sin, so that very much depends on the individual and his willingness to lead a consecrated life. While salvation is the same in principle for all men, it differs greatly in fulness and completeness, owing to the presence or absence of consecrated effort. But, as expressed in the teaching and exemplified in the character of Jesus, its richest experience requires personal effort for others as well as for ourselves.

Before this chapter is concluded some further observations should be made. And, first, Jesus did not refer to the fall of man, or the doctrine that Adam and Eve fell from a state of perfection to a sinful condition through voluntary disobedience to a divine command, thus bringing "death into the world and all our woe," as Milton says. Adam and Eve in Genesis are both symbolic names, the former signifying to the Hebrew writer earth-born, because the first man was supposed to be formed out of the dust of the ground; the latter signifying life, because the first woman was conceived as the mother of all living. Jesus knew that man was created innocent, not perfect, and that all imperfect beings are liable sooner or later to fall from a state of innocence. He

knew, also, that physical death is not a consequence of sin, though sin may induce disease and shorten life, but a consequence of finiteness, and that it is as natural for men to die as to be born.

Nor did he refer to original sin, or the doctrine that all men sinned in Adam, and fell with him in the first transgression. He knew that sin is a wrong choice, or a choosing to do what we believe is not right; that people are not sinners because Adam sinned nor because their parents sinned, but because they have sinned; that the responsibility for wrongdoing rests upon the wrong-doer, not upon his progenitors; that sin implies guilt, and that no man is guilty of having done wrong if he did not know that what he did was not right. All men are naturally liable to err, but there is no such thing as original sin, except in the sense of evil propensities, or inherited tendencies to go astray. It is an unscriptural expression, however, and one that is misleading till it is properly explained.

Neither did Jesus make any reference to the doctrine of atonement, though he taught the doctrine of reconciliation in the parable of the Lost Son. He knew that atonement is in the character of God, and that nothing was needed to make him willing to receive the spirit of a little child that had never sinned, or to forgive the sins of a wicked person who complies with the condition of forgiveness. In the parable recorded in Luke 15:11-20, where the father represents God and the prodigal anyone who has wandered from the path of right, he teaches that,

when a sinner repents and turns to God, there is always a welcome awaiting him; for, as soon as the erring son came to himself and resolved to go to his father, the father is represented as going forth to meet him, and as greeting him, when they met, with a kiss of reconciliation.

Then in conclusion it should be specially noticed that Jesus said nothing of his death as having any relation to forgiveness or as having any bearing on salvation. He knew that his death would have no effect on God, and that nothing whatever could affect him in the sense of making him able or willing to save. According to Matthew 9:13, he taught with Hosea 6:6 that God desires mercy or compassion, and not sacrifice. It was the Apostles that introduced his death in connection with reconciliation, because they found it had a consecrative influence on many minds; but Romans 5:10, which refers to some who were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, expressly declares that we are saved by his life. He knew, moreover, that God is an infinite Being, who can receive nothing from man; that he is also a benevolent Being, and needs nothing to make him propitious; that forgiveness is an attribute of the divine character, and that God forgives freely and saves graciously because of his compassionating love.

Furthermore, though his work was redemptive in the evangelical sense, Jesus never referred to any scheme of redemption or to any plan of salvation. In his teaching redemption is not a scheme, but a

conscious state; and salvation is not a plan, but a personal experience. It is an experience that results from having a right relation to God from day to day. Jesus interposed nothing between men and their Maker, not even himself, except to show them the way, and teach them the truth, and inspire them with spiritual life.

Thus he created a new age and introduced a new order, not by offering men a new religion, but by purifying and perfecting the old religion. This he did partly by giving them a fuller knowledge of God and a better understanding of his will, but specially by exemplifying what he taught in his character and life. By showing that we are consciously saved through following him and living as he lived, he not only interpreted religion, but also expressed salvation, in terms of life. And living as he lived in purpose and spirit all the time he called eternal life.

CHAPTER VII

THE RESURRECTION

By the New Testament writers resurrection is regarded both as a fact and as a doctrine. But the nature of the fact and the importance of the doctrine have, from the beginning, been matters of dispute. So it is necessary to show, first, in what form the fact is true; and, secondly, in what sense the doctrine is important.

Most Christian teachers to-day admit that, while belief in the virgin birth of Jesus is not essential to evangelical orthodoxy, belief in his resurrection is. But because the narratives are fragmentary and incomplete, we must seek to determine how they should be treated and interpreted.

Four different accounts of the post-crucifixion appearances of Jesus are given in the Gospels, one account by each Evangelist, but in some particulars no two of them agree. On the contrary, the differences are so numerous that they have never been harmonized, and it is quite impossible to prepare a satisfactory harmony. The accounts are so conflicting, indeed, that an attempt to harmonize them leads only to confusion.

Matthew, who alone refers to the earthquake and

the descent of an angel, says in chapter 28:1-10 that, after the crucifixion, Jesus was seen by the two Marys on their departure from the sepulcher to tell the Disciples that an angel from heaven had informed them he was risen from the dead, and would appear to his brethren in Galilee. Mark, who does not refer to the resurrection, says in chapter 16:1-13 that Salome was with the two Marys when they went to anoint the body with spices; but in the appendix at verse 12 it is stated that he was manifested in another form to two disciples, as they walked, on their way into the country. Luke says in chapter 24:10 that Joanna also was with the other women; and at verse 16 states that the two men to whom Jesus had joined himself on the road to Emmaus did not recognize him when they saw him. Then he adds at verse 36 that Jesus suddenly appeared the same day in Jerusalem to a company of the Apostles, who supposed they had beheld a spirit. John speaks of three appearances to the Apostolic company—one in chapter 20:16, one in verse 19, and one in verse 26; but of the women who saw him he mentions only Mary Magdalene. Besides these reported appearances, in I Corinthians 15:5, 6, Paul records two others, namely, one to Peter, an appearance of which we have no narrative, and one to five hundred brethren at once, an appearance which no other writer reports.

Reading these accounts with care, we find not only that no two of them agree, but also that no one of them describes the actual rising itself. We find,

also, that the risen Jesus was not seen by the world, or the people in general, but that the manifestations were granted only to certain favored individuals. In Acts 1:2, 3 Luke says that he showed himself after the passion to "the apostles whom he had chosen" to be witnesses of the fact. We find, moreover, that the manifestations were received with doubt and hesitation by those to whom they were granted, and that Thomas is said to have refused to believe Jesus had actually risen, till after he had examined the wounds in his hands and side.

From the conflicting character of the accounts and the strange effect of the manifestations several questions naturally arise. How could a body with lacerated hands and a pierced side walk about so soon after it was crucified? If the physical body of Jesus actually rose from the grave, why did the Disciples not know him when he appeared to them? Why did he appear suddenly and vanish suddenly, like a phantom? Why were they terrified and affrighted at the sight of him? And why did they suppose they had seen a spirit when they looked at him? These questions are as legitimate as they are natural.

So the first thing to be investigated is the exact nature of the risen body. In what form did Jesus appear after his passion to some of his disciples? Four different opinions have long been prevalent. One assumes that the natural body, both in substance and in attributes, was raised unchanged; a second assumes that a body, in substance entirely

new, was substituted for the original body; a third supposes a body the same in substance, but endowed with new properties and powers; the fourth supposes a body glorified as completely as after the ascension.

Only the first opinion assumes the same body to have been raised, but it cannot be correct, because it is inconsistent with the reports given of the appearances. The second must be rejected, because it supposes a new creation, and not a rising of the natural body. The fourth opinion might be accepted by some persons, though, if true, it could not be proved. The third, which is suggested by the accounts in Luke and John, is considered by many theologians to be the preferable view.

Dr. Whedon, who was a Methodist commentator and had a logical mind, believed that, as the appearances for forty days were only occasional, Jesus abode during most of that period in the realm of the invisible. "This view assumes," he says, "that though our Lord's risen body had its own proper form and substance, and its own proper outline and limitation, yet that he was able, more or less, to modify it at will." He believed also that his body then possessed a superiority to the control of gravitation, and to the need of food, clothing, and other physical necessities.

But to assume that Jesus appeared with a body that he could modify at will is to assume something contrary not only to science and experience, but also to the whole course of nature. The accounts in

Luke 24:36-46 and John 20:19-26, which have suggested such an opinion, belong to an age when the laws of God were not understood as they are now; and, though it may have been acceptable to unthinking people once, it could not be accepted by men trained in the schools of to-day. Such accounts represent the beliefs of the time when they were written, and so do the references to an angel in the accounts recorded by Matthew and Mark.

Dr. Denney was wiser than Dr. Whedon in his treatment of the account in Luke. Contrasting the material teaching of the Evangelist with the spiritual teaching of the Apostle in I Corinthians 15:35-38 with respect to the raising of the dead, that devout scholar asks, and each question expects a negative answer, "Can we in consistency with Paul's doctrine of the resurrection body conceive Jesus saying, 'Handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye behold me having'? Can we conceive that he took a piece of broiled fish and ate it before the Disciples? It is not wanton to ask such questions; they rise involuntarily in the mind, and we have no choice but to face them."¹

Consistently with Paul's teaching, we cannot conceive him speaking or acting as Luke reports any more than we can conceive him appearing with a body that could materialize and spiritualize at will. All these features of his account are inconceivable to the modern mind. They are not found in Matthew and Mark, but represent the thinking of cer-

¹ *Jesus and the Gospel*, p. 144.

tain persons when Luke wrote. God works by law, not by magic, and his laws are uniform in their operation. He is a changeless, not a capricious, Being. In us caprice is possible, but not in him.

Of two things, therefore, we may rest assured, and in the judgment of the present writer they should be frankly admitted. The one is, we do not know what became of the body of Jesus after it was placed in the tomb; the other is, we cannot tell in what form he appeared to some of his followers subsequently to the entombment. But there is no good ground for supposing that his physical body actually rose from the grave, or for supposing that he appeared with a body that he could modify at will. If the form in which he appeared was not subject to the ordinary condition of material bodies, then it was not a natural body, for God is God and law is law. In his note on John 20:19 Dr. Plummer asserts, "Before the resurrection he was visible, unless he willed it otherwise; after the resurrection it would seem that he was invisible, unless he willed it otherwise." But that assertion is unreasonable and unworthy of belief.

What, then, ought we to believe? The character of the accounts in both Luke and John suggests a spiritual manifestation in each case; and the number of times it is stated that those to whom he appeared were frightened and did not recognize him, thinking they had seen a spirit, suggests the same thing. But the account in John 20:17 of the appearance to Mary Magdalene suggests the same thing

more strongly, if possible, than either of the other two.

There Jesus is represented as saying to her, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended unto the Father; but go unto my brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and my God and your God." That passage indicates that the writer believed the appearance was a spiritual manifestation, and that Mary was in doubt with respect to what she saw, though at first she thought she had seen the gardener. As Dr. Whedon remarks here, "She rushed forth to touch him, as if to realize that it was truly her Lord, and not a pure spirit."

Discussing the things that may have contributed to her non-recognition of the Master, Meyer says, "The essential cause is to be found in the mysterious alteration of the corporeity and of the appearance of Jesus, which manifests itself from his resurrection onwards, so that he comes and disappears in a marvelous way." But what he states is as unreasonable as what Dr. Plummer has stated. The observations of these two men are equally unsatisfactory, because they fail to explain the recorded appearance. A spirit does not materialize, we know, and a natural body cannot appear and disappear at pleasure. From the character of the accounts, therefore, we are warranted in concluding that all the appearances recorded were spiritual, not material, manifestations.

For other reasons, also, we are warranted in reach-

ing that conclusion. In the list of manifestations given in I Corinthians 15:5-8 Paul says that last of all Christ appeared to him, also, "as unto one born out of due time." Here the appearance must have been a spiritual manifestation. Later in the chapter, at verse 12, the Apostle describes Christ as having been raised from the dead, not from the grave. In like manner Matthew 28:7 describes him as risen, not from the grave, but from the dead. For all these reasons we should think of a risen spirit, not of a risen body. Then, when he is said to have appeared first in Jerusalem and shortly afterwards in Galilee, we know he did not walk there; and we may be sure the Evangelists knew he did not walk there. That appearance also proves that we should think of a risen spirit, and not of a risen body. On every ground we are justified in believing that the appearances recorded were spiritual manifestations.

Since the resurrection of Jesus was a rising from the dead, not a rising from the grave, the empty tomb has no personal interest for us, and is of no particular significance in itself. The thing of consequence to us is the fact that the Apostles obtained evidence that his spirit was alive, and that its life-giving power might be experienced by all who would receive it. In that form the fact of his rising is true and of great value. The evidence they obtained produced a conviction of his triumph over death; and that conviction gave Paul an assurance that, as he triumphed, so all his followers might triumph, because his victory is a pledge of theirs.

Hence we should distinguish between what is called the Easter faith, which is a conviction of the victory of Jesus over death, and what is called the Easter message, which is the story of the empty tomb and of the various manifestations to his disciples. The former is the essential thing for us, because it is a faith that does not depend on the nature or manner of the appearances. To speak with Professor Harnack, "Whatever may have happened at the grave and in the appearances, one thing is certain: from the grave the indestructible faith in the conquest of death and in an eternal life (hereafter) has taken its origin."²

Enough has now been said to show that a belief in the physical resurrection of Jesus is not simply unscientific, but impossible of acceptance. Such a belief, if it could be entertained, would have no religious value. Paul does not refer to the empty tomb, which indicates that either he had not heard of the story or that, if he had, it was not the origin of his faith. The proof to him of the risen Christ was in his own experience. It was the spirit of Jesus that arrested him, that convicted him, and that constrained him to become a Christian. And the proof to us likewise is not the Gospel narratives, but our personal experience. We know that his spirit is alive, because it lives in us.

Having shown in what form the fact is true, let us see in what sense the doctrine is important. The fact refers to the rising of Christ from the dead; the

² *Das Wesen des Christentums*, p. 101.

doctrine has reference to the rising of his followers, of which his rising was the proof and pledge. Understood in that way, the doctrine is a purely Christian one.

Later Jewish theologians taught that, when the Messiah came, he would summon the righteous Israelites from their graves to share his glory, as suggested in the Apocalypse of Enoch 51:1. From this teaching was developed a belief in the resurrection of the flesh, a belief accepted by the Pharisees, but rejected by the Sadducees, at the beginning of our era. That is the belief perpetuated in the Apostles' Creed, where the original reads, "I believe in the resurrection of the flesh," but which is wrongly rendered in the English versions, "I believe in the resurrection of the body."

It has been shown, however, that the resurrection of Jesus is described by the sacred writers as a rising from the dead, not from the grave. Hence the view held by the Pharisees and perpetuated in the Creed is unevangelical. It is also unreasonable; for, as Paul says in I Corinthians 15:50, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God"; and his object in saying it was to teach that nothing liable to change and decay can enter the future state. If it is inconceivable that the physical body of Jesus rose, it is also inconceivable that the physical bodies of other men should rise. "The whole argument in I Corinthians, chapter 15, to the effect that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven, is based," as Professor Kirsopp Lake says, "on the

parallelism between the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of Christians.”³

It was the material view just discussed that Paul was combating, or the error that he was correcting, when he penned the words quoted in the preceding paragraph. A material conception of the resurrection has led many to believe that human bodies would be literally raised from their graves, be reconstructed into their original form, and in that form be taken into the spirit world. That gross belief, which has produced grotesque descriptions of the future union of the different parts of the body, was rejected by some on account of its physical, and by others on account of its intellectual, difficulties, the former opposing the doctrine because of its impossibility, the latter denying it because of its irrationality.

Earlier in the chapter the Apostle states emphatically that the body deposited in the grave is not the body of the resurrection, and that any man who thinks it is is foolish or senseless. In answer to the questions, How are the dead raised? And with what manner of body do they come? he replies in verse 36, “Thou foolish one; that which thou thyself sowest is not quickened, except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be, but a bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other kind; but God giveth it a body even as it pleased him, and to each seed a body of its own.” The idea is each grain produces a body

³ *The Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, p. 35.

according to its original constitution, not arbitrarily, but by a divine law.

The statement here corresponds with what is stated elsewhere. Near the beginning of the chapter in verses 12-14 he says, "If Christ is preached that he hath been raised from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, neither hath Christ been raised; and if Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain." There the Apostle intimates again that the resurrection of believers is similar to that of Christ, for he regards his resurrection as a proof of theirs, and employs the same language to describe it. As Christ was raised from the dead, so are they; and if they are not raised, neither was he, Paul says.

When he states that if Christ has not been raised, then his preaching, as well as their faith, is vain, he cannot mean useless or meaningless in its bearing on this life, but must mean in its bearing on their feeling of conscious forgiveness in Christ and on their hope of future glory with him. When he adds in verse 17 that, "if Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins," he assumes that conscious forgiveness depends upon the vivifying action of his spirit. In that respect the form of his teaching is different from that of Jesus, though in principle it is the same. Jesus taught that God forgives men of his own accord and for his own sake; the Apostle teaches in Ephesians

4:32 that God forgives them freely, but that he forgives them in Christ.

The point to be noticed with regard to the resurrection in each case is that the body which is laid in the grave is not the body which is raised from the dead, but something which springs from it or rises out of it; and the word Paul employs does not signify resurrection or a rising again, but a rising up of something from the body. The term in the original is mistranslated, and the translation is a very misleading one. Resurrection (*resurrectio*) is the rendering given in the Vulgate, a rendering which was afterwards adopted by our English translators and is retained in all our versions.

The word in Greek is "anastasis," which is an exact transliteration of the original, and has become a recognized English word. It is derived from a verb meaning to stand or rise up, and means a standing or rising up. The Germans have a word, *Auferstehung*, which expresses the true idea of the original. The Greek term is used of a rising from a bad to a good condition in Luke 2:34, where Simeon tells Mary that her child is appointed for the falling and rising up (anastasis) of many in Israel. It is used of a rising from the dead in chapter 11:25 by John, who represents Jesus as saying to Martha, "I am the resurrection (anastasis) and the life"—to all who unite themselves to him, of course. It is used of the future state of existence upon which those risen from the dead have entered by Mark, who says in chapter 12:19-23 that the Sadducees asked Jesus

on one occasion whose wife a woman who had had seven husbands would be in the resurrection (anastasis).

In Corinthians 15:12 it is used by Paul of the rising from the state of the dead itself: "How say some among you that there is no resurrection (anastasis) of the dead?" But in verses 35, 36, answering the question, "How are the dead raised?" he explains the anastasis in accordance with its true signification; for he goes on to speak, not of a rising again, as if the body laid in the grave would reappear, but of a rising up of something from the body. That something, we gather from the context, is the spirit of the personality, which rises and becomes active at the time of death. The inquirer he was answering assumed that what comes from a material body must be material, which is true of things material, such as grains or seeds, but is not true of beings that have a spirit and develop a spiritual personality.

In the case of men and women Paul does not mean that what is raised is identical with what is laid in the grave, but that something springs from it which represents its character, just as that which rises from a seed of grain represents its species. His object in that passage is to show that it is absurd to suppose that the physical body must be raised in order that the spirit of a person might persist. On the contrary, he teaches that it is the true self that continues to live, and that becomes active at death.

With regard to human beings Paul says in verse

44, "There is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body"; and he indicates that the spiritual springs from the natural body, as above stated. What the spiritual body is he does not attempt to tell, but his language seems to mean that it is the spirit of the personality, or the real self as seen by the Creator and recognized by him as such. At all events, he suggests that it is the spirit that rises at death and which continues to live and act. In other words, he teaches that that which dies, the body, never revives; and that which survives, the spirit, never dies. That is all we know at present, and all we need to know.

What is there taught accords with the divine order, as he proceeds to explain. To translate freely verse 46, he says, "That which comes first is not the spiritual, but the natural, and afterwards comes the spiritual," which means that the natural must precede the spiritual, because the latter springs from the former, being developed more or less completely by each regenerate soul, for the Apostle is speaking only of renewed men and women. Then he affirms that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, which has already been discussed; and this affirmation is made to prevent all mistake in regard to the nature of the body that is raised from the dead, and that rises at death.

Continuing his explanation, Paul says in verse 53, "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality," meaning that, when the mortal life ends, the incorruptible life

begins. The verse is happily paraphrased in the Twentieth Century New Testament: "This perishable body of ours must put on an imperishable form, and this dying body a deathless form." The translation, as well as the paraphrase, teaches that death is not the extinction, but the liberation, of the spirit; and that, whatever may take place at death, the spirit remains incorruptible and imperishable.

Such is the Apostle's argument, and it is conclusive. Besides showing that the resurrection (anastasis) of Christ was spiritual and that ours is similar to his, it suggests that our activity after death will be similar to his. After his crucifixion and glorification Jesus became a life-giving spirit, Paul states in verse 45; and that implies that all good men and women, so far as they become Christlike in character, will also become life-giving spirits, though each in a different degree. What his spirit does uniquely for all who are energized by it theirs will do, in some measure, for those whom they may energize.

We may now understand why Paul and his fellow Apostles made so much of the death and resurrection of Jesus, why they connected the two so closely, and why they referred to them so frequently. They did so because his resurrection (anastasis) was the pledge of theirs; for the proof of his rising, we have seen, was not the empty grave, nor a physical reappearance, but a number of spiritual manifestations. In other words, it was his risen spirit, not his risen

body, that convinced them that he was still alive in the Evangelical sense of the term.

And his rising was also an assurance to them that all his followers would similarly rise. In verse 20 of the chapter we have just examined Paul says, "Now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of them that are asleep," meaning the earnest or pledge of the rising of those who sleep in him. Also in I Thessalonians 4:14 he says, to translate literally, "If we believe that Jesus died and rose, even so those who are fallen asleep will God through Jesus bring with him"; that is, those who through union with him have entered into rest. It was this faith that led Peter in his first Epistle, chapter 1:3, to exclaim, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." Ever since the days of the Apostles that hope has strengthened the faith and comforted the hearts of his disciples. And the preaching of Jesus and the resurrection (anastasis) will continue to beget faith and inspire hope in true believers to the end of time.

The doctrine has thus a great practical importance. To think that those who sleep in Jesus are at rest with him and at peace with God is a cheering thought, but to be assured of the active life of the spirit after death through our union with him is a blessed assurance. It is soothing and sustaining to

know that, because he lives, we shall live also; but it is animating and uplifting to believe that all who lead the eternal life here will share the life immortal of their heavenly Father in the world to come.

The idea of a resurrection is found in the Old Testament, but it differs very much from that presented in the New; and the references there are scanty and more or less obscure. Some passages suggest a national revival, not an actual restoration to life; and in one passage, at least, the speaker seems to have thought of departed Israelites living again on the earth to share in the future glory of the nation.

For instance, the prophecy in Ezekiel 37:1-10 respecting the valley of dry bones refers to a revival of the nation, not to a rising from the dead; and the promise in Hosea 6:2 that, after a short delay, Jehovah would revive the people, and raise them up so that they should live before him, has a similar reference. The rising there is but a figurative expression for national regeneration. In each case the revival is connected with the circumstances of the Jewish community.

But the picture presented in Isaiah 26:19 is peculiar. There the prophet, speaking for Jehovah, says, "Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall rise." This utterance, which shows that the dead belonged to Jehovah as well as to Israel, is supposed to express the hope of the community, though it may express only the longing of the nation for the restoration of its dead. Owing to the character of

the description, the meaning is difficult to determine with certainty. If the speaker contemplated a literal rising of dead saints, he conceived it as the result of a miraculous act on the part of God, and as limited to members of the covenant people.

A significant passage in Daniel exceeds this one in clearness and comprehensiveness, for here the hope of rising is restricted to the godly Israelites, while there a belief in the rising of both the righteous and the unrighteous is expressed. In chapter 12:2, where the rising of the ungodly is first expressed in Scripture, the author says, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." An awakening, not of all men, but of Israelites only, is there meant, it should be observed, as a universal rising of all men is not expressly mentioned in the Old Testament.

These passages show that the idea is much less developed in the Old Testament than in the New. The prophets conceived of a national reconstruction, and thought of the rising again of the nation; the Apostles conceived of a spiritual anastasis, and thought of the rising up of the spirit. Furthermore, the former spoke chiefly of the rising again of Israelites, but the latter speak of the rising up of all men. In both these respects the doctrine is peculiarly and distinctively a Christian one.

Since the spirit rises when the body dies, we might have expected the Apostles to connect the anastasis of each man or woman with the hour of death. But

instead of so doing, by reason of the belief in a general judgment at that time, they connected it with the end of the world, when a great assize was supposed to take place. That is to say, they connected a general rising with a general judgment, which is popularly called by theologians the final judgment.

That was a Jewish notion, however, for which there is no support in the teaching of Jesus as reported by the Synoptists. In chapter 25:31-35 Matthew reports him as speaking of a great judgment in connection with the coming of the Son of man at the end of the age; but that separating judgment does not refer to the end of the world, nor does it apply to the mass of mankind. It manifestly applies only to those who have had the advantage of hearing the Gospel, and not to heathen or non-Christian nations.

In chapter 5:28, 29 John represents Jesus as speaking of an hour in which all that are in the tombs shall come forth, "they that have done good unto the resurrection (anastasis) of life, and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection (anastasis) of judgment," a condemnatory in contrast to an approving judgment being meant. This passage refers to a general rising and to a general judgment, but it is expressed in the language of the Fourth Evangelist, and is unlike anything the first three Gospels report Jesus to have said.

This passage and Acts 24:15, which declares that there will be a resurrection (anastasis) of both the just and the unjust, are, as Dr. Plummer observes

in his note on verse 29, "the only direct assertions in the New Testament of a bodily resurrection of the wicked." But each passage represents the way of thinking at the time. Interpreted in harmony with what Paul teaches, neither assertion should be taken literally. If either writer meant his language to be taken literally, his thought was different from that of the Apostle. According to his teaching, all that the passage in John or the passage in Acts means is that every soul passes in judgment before God, and that every tomb or grave will be represented when the divine judgment is complete.

In I Corinthians 14:25 Paul refers to a region where the secrets of the heart are manifest, meaning the human conscience or consciousness. That is the region where desires are felt and motives are formed, where our thoughts are judged and the moral quality of our deeds is determined; that, too, is where the divine judgment takes place, and where God discriminates thoughts and motives from the actions that proceed from them. And a little reflection will convince us that there is no other region where it could take place.

God is not a localized being, nor is he present in one part of the universe any more than in another part. Neither is there any portion of space in which he could assemble the spirits of mankind, if such an assembly were deemed desirable. But such an assembly is not necessary, either to vindicate his righteous character or to enable him to deal justly with everyone. All men are brought before the bar

of God in conscience, which is the witness each man has in himself, approving or condemning him according as he obeys or disobeys its voice.

He judges men in accordance with their works or deeds. That is the explicit teaching of both Testaments, as the following passages will show: Psalm 62:12, Proverbs 24:29, Matthew 16:27, Romans 2:6, I Corinthians 3:8. And his judgment depends on their attitude to the truth; that is, on the measure of light or knowledge they have received, and the use they have made of it. Those who are without the written law are judged by the principles of right and wrong implanted in their nature, and those who have the written law are judged by the code of morals they possess. Romans 2:12 declares, "As many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned under law shall be judged by law." But the judgment is going on now and here. It is a divine judicial process which is constantly in operation.

A statement by Professor Milton Terry should be pondered carefully by those who have not thought seriously on this subject. "We miss the full Scriptural idea of judgment," he says, "when we conceive of it as confined to one last day, one formal rehearsal of every act of human history before a tribunal in the heavens, at which the individuals of all nations and ages shall be simultaneously assembled. So far as this conception involves the fundamental idea that every individual shall be brought into judgment before God, and that the

issue of such judgment will be according to character and deeds, it is warranted not only by numerous particular texts, but also by the whole drift of Scripture teaching concerning the character of God and his governmental relation to men.”⁴

Divine judgment is in operation all the time, and individuals are being continually approved or condemned for their conduct. Hence this is our day of judgment, and the hour of our departure is the hour of our anastasis. It is scarcely necessary to tell thoughtful readers that in the spirit world there are no books, nor to tell them that God needs no records to inform him of the moral quality of our deeds. Such expressions as “the books were opened” in Daniel 7:10 and in Revelation 20:12, like “gates of pearl” and “streets of gold,” are figurative forms of speech. They were designed to stir the imagination and make the picture vivid and impressive.

Popular notions of a general resurrection and a general judgment are suggested largely by the figurative language of the Scriptures, and so are the popular notions of purgatory and of an intermediate state. The doctrine of an intermediate state between the time of death and the day of judgment rests upon a misconception, as also does the doctrine of purgatory, where souls are supposed to be cleansed from sin before being taken to Paradise. The New Testament never refers to such a state or place. As Professor David Smith stated in the correspondence column of the *British Weekly* for June

⁴ *Biblical Hermeneutics*, pp. 449-450.

12, 1913, "There is no Scriptural authority for an intermediate place, and the Roman Catholic doctrine of Purgatory is simply a mediaeval fiction."

Because it accords with the teaching of Jesus, who said to the thief on the cross, as recorded in Luke 23:43, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," we may conclude this chapter with a familiar stanza from a well-known hymn composed by Charles Wesley, and founded on Revelation 14:13:

The saints who die of Christ possess,
Enter into immediate rest;
For them no further test remains,
Of purging fires and torturing pains.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SONSHIP

Sonship to God has several aspects in Scripture, and is variously viewed by the writers. By some it is viewed as a natural, by others as a national, by others as a personal, by others again as an official, and by others still as an impersonal relationship. Each of the first three aspects requires only a brief consideration, but each of the last two demands a full discussion.

Natural sonship to God is the relation each man holds to him as his Maker, for by creation all men are regarded as his offspring. As their Maker, we conceive of him as their Father; and as his offspring, we speak of them as his sons. In that sense Luke calls Adam a son of God in chapter 3:38; and in the same sense Jesus, as a human being, was his son.

The idea of national sonship appears in Scripture for the first time in Exodus 4:22, where the Israelites are collectively styled the son of God. Commissioned by Jehovah, Moses went to Pharaoh and said in his name, "Israel is my son, my firstborn; and I have said unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me," the Israelitish people being regarded as

the first-born of God, because it was thought to be as dear to Jehovah as the first-born of Pharaoh was to him.

Here the whole body of Israelites is called the son of God, not because he was the giver of their natural life, but because he was the author of their national existence. Having chosen him to be their supreme object of worship, they had a moral relation to Jehovah, and on that account he was conceived as having a particular affection for them. That fact explains why Hosea claimed a special divine regard for Israel.

Speaking for Jehovah in chapter 11:1, the prophet says, "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." His special regard for the Israelites was owing to their special devotion to him, which enabled them to obtain a fuller revelation of his truth than any other nation of ancient times. Hence there was no arbitrariness on his part in electing them to sonship and in regarding them as a people peculiarly his own.

Personal sonship to God does not appear till we come to the Psalms. Though the author of Deuteronomy, addressing the people in chapter 14:1 says, "Ye are the children (sons) of Jehovah, your God," he did not mean that every member of the nation should look upon himself alone as a son of God independently of the community. To borrow a sentence from Professor Oehler, "It is only the body of the covenant people that have the name sons of

God, and the Israelite has a share in the God-sonship only in virtue of being incorporated into this body.”¹

Individual personal sonship is first found in Psalm 2:7. There, speaking for Jehovah and referring to an ideal ruler, the writer says, “Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee.” Here we have the earliest mention in the Bible of personal sonship to God, though in II Samuel 7:14 the prophet Nathan assured David that his successor should be regarded by Jehovah as his son. This verse is an echo of the promise made to David, and points to a special fulfilment of it.

The point of time designated by the expression, “This day have I begotten thee,” was either the date of a decree there mentioned or more probably, as modern scholars think, the day when the ruler would be anointed and publicly recognized as a divinely constituted king. In Psalm 89:27 the title first-born is conferred upon the king, just as it had been conferred upon the nation, the king, like the nation, being conceived as an object of special divine regard.

Because Psalm 2:7 was long believed to speak of eternal sonship, the reader should note carefully that the statement in the verse refers not to an eternal fact, but to a temporal act. The words have not a metaphysical, but a historical, import, the declaration being made in time, not in eternity; and the begetting being conceived as a filial relation, not as an eternal generation. The phrase, “I have be-

¹ *Old Testament Theology*, p. 179.

gotten thee," denotes not the origin of the filial relation, but its solemn recognition. The king would become son the moment he was anointed and crowned. There is not the slightest suggestion in the psalm of the eternal generation of the Son, as theologians have so often claimed.

Personal sonship to God implies a spiritual as well as a filial relation to him. After Israel became a monarchy each rightly constituted king was viewed as his vicegerent; and though he was not chosen for his spiritual qualities, he was expected to be a man of piety. Some of the kings were poor representatives of religion, however, just as some ecclesiastics have been. Others, again, were deeply pious rulers, and represented Jehovah very worthily, considering the age in which they lived.

For the sake of the relation they express, the words, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee," are applied to Jesus in Acts 13:33 and in Hebrews 1:5. In the former passage they are cited in reference to his being raised up or brought into being; in the latter they are quoted in recognition of a special personal sonship to God. The declaration at his baptism, "This is my beloved Son," recorded in Matthew 3:17, was also intended as a solemn recognition of the special spiritual relation which made him an object of peculiar divine pleasure. God was particularly pleased with him because he was raised up to be a light for revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of his people Israel, as Luke 2:32 makes Simeon say.

And, so far as his followers please God, they also are his sons in the same spiritual sense, each of them in his own degree. Jesus seems to have included himself with his Disciples when he taught them to pray, "Our Father which art in heaven," just as he included himself with his fellow countrymen when, as represented in John 4:22, he said to the woman of Samaria, "Ye (Samaritans) worship that which ye know not; we (Jews) worship that which we know."

In Romans 8:14, 15 those are called sons of God who have received the spirit of adoption, as the original is rendered in our English versions. But the Greek word translated adoption means literally to place in the relation of a son, so that those so placed may feel God to be their Father and themselves to be his children. Jesus was a son, as all his faithful followers are sons, because of a special spiritual relation to the Father; for as the Apostle declares, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God." All spiritual sonship to him is the same in kind.

Official sonship, which is a phase of personal sonship, is the special relation the theocratic king was supposed to hold to Jehovah after being regarded by him as his son. The kingship and the sonship, however, are not identical, though the latter suggests what the character of the former was expected to be. As Dr. A. B. Davidson remarks in his comment on Hebrews 1:5, "The closeness of fellowship between the king and Jehovah, the similarity in interests

and character, the fatherly love and protection on the one hand and the filial honor and obedience on the other, the special spiritual endowments of the king for his office,—these constitute the sonship, which, though not identical with the kingship, is essential to the right exercise of it.”²

Jesus is called the Son of God in such passages as Matthew 16:16, Mark 3:11, and Luke 4:41 in the official sense expressed in Psalm 2:7, because it was then a recognized title of the Messiah, which many at that time believed him to be, but which he was not in their sense of the term, and did not claim to be. According to Matthew 26:64, he admitted to the high priest at his trial before the scribes and elders that he was the Son of God, but the force of his admission is made clear by the context, which shows that he made the admission of sonship in a sense peculiar to himself.

In reply to the solemn adjuration of the high priest Jesus answered, “Thou hast said; nevertheless I say unto you, Henceforth ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.” That is a pictorial expression, borrowed from the Apocalypse of Enoch, where it is used of a superhuman spirit. That fact proves that the reference in the verse just quoted is not to the historical Jesus, but to the risen Christ. It was the risen Christ, or the spirit of Jesus, that they should see sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.

² *Handbooks for Bible Classes and Private Students*, p. 46.

He seems to have accepted the title, Son of God, in the sense in which it is used in the account of his temptation, where Matthew 4:3 represents Diabolus as saying, "If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." There, as here, the word for son is without the article; and nouns are often without the article in Greek when they express in the relation of or in the character of. His words, as quoted by his accusers in Matthew 27:43, were θεοῦ ἐκ μὲν υἱός or literally translated, "Of God I am Son." Hence his admission meant, to speak with Webster and Wilkinson in their comment on Matthew 4:3, "I claim to stand toward God in the relation of Son." The expression would imply that he was his Son in a sense which must now be explained.

Two illustrations of this use of the term occur in the Epistle to the Hebrews. In chapter 1:2, contrasting Jesus with the ancient prophets, in line with whom he is placed as the last and greatest, the author says that at the end of these days, that is, the termination of the Jewish dispensation, God spoke unto us, not "in his Son," but, as the revisers indicate in the margin, "in a Son." The omission of the article shows the meaning to be one in the relation of son. In chapter 5:8, referring still to Jesus, the author says again, "Though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." Though he had the relation to God of a son in a special sense, he was disciplined as other

sons are disciplined, and learned by experience in the school of suffering what it is to obey.

The contrast with the prophets shows that the writer, like the Evangelists, regarded him as being a successor of those ancient men who were inspired of God to communicate his truth and interpret his will to the Israelites. Like the Evangelists, too, he looked upon Jesus not only as an inspired prophet, but also as a unique Son of God. The primary object of his Epistle was to show the dignity and exalted nature of Jesus as the one who realized the principle of divine sonship in a preëminent way. That was why he twice applied to him the words of the second Psalm, "Thou art my Son."

It was his relation to God as a son and as a prophet that this Apostle and the Synoptists particularly emphasized. With regard to them that was shown in a previous chapter; with regard to him it may be just as clearly shown. He begins his Epistle by saying that "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in a Son."

In this verse, which indicates the drift of the whole chapter, he teaches the gradual unveiling of the divine will from age to age by different men and through different means, till its final revelation for purposes of salvation in the life and teaching of him who was in a specific sense the Son of God. And that was just what the first three Evangelists did. It should be stated here, however, that the title was

not applied to him in that specific sense during the days of his flesh.

Some of the Twelve Disciples thought of him as the Son of God in the sense of being a temporal Messiah, but the Evangelists speak of him as having been the Son of God in the sense of being the Son of man, which is an apocalyptic expression that denotes a spiritual Messiah. This title was not given to him until after he became a spirit.

John, or the author of the Fourth Gospel, who has his own particular method and point of view, describes him as the Son of God, but in a way that makes the nature of his sonship very plain. Toward the end of his Gospel, in chapter 20:31, he says, "These (things) are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name." Several features of this passage are peculiar, and the peculiarities are characteristic of this Gospel.

One peculiar feature is the declaration that Jesus is the Son of God in a unique, official sense. Another is the duty of believing him to be the Son of God in that unique sense, that is, not merely to acknowledge his unique sonship, but to prove our belief in him by following him. The importance of so believing is suggested in I John 4:15, where the author says, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God."

How is that teaching to be harmonized with what Jesus teaches in Matthew 19:17, where Jesus is reported to have said to the young man who came

inquiring what he should do that he might have eternal life, "If thou wouldest enter into life, keep the commandments"? it may be asked. The answer is very simple, and it may be given in a single paragraph, because in principle the teaching is the same.

The name of God in Scripture is his character as revealed or manifested. In like manner, the name of Jesus is his character as made known to us by the Evangelists. To have life in his name, therefore, is to obtain eternal life by leading a life in aim and motive such as he lived and developing a character in purpose and spirit such as he had. In other words, it is to enter into life by loving God and keeping the commandments with his purpose and spirit.

Thus, the reader will see, his relation to God as a son and as a prophet suggests the sense in which he was the Son of God in an official sense by the authors of the Scriptures. He was a son, not as a ruler or governor, but as a teacher and preacher. The spirit of the Lord was upon him because he was anointed to preach good tidings to the poor, as Luke 4:18 records. The sense is more fully suggested by Romans 1:4, where the Apostle says, "He was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection (anastasis) of the dead." By both of these writers he was plainly regarded as the Son of God, not in a temporal, but in a spiritual and official sense.

Such passages prove that Jesus was not viewed as the Son of God in a special, spiritual sense till

after his crucifixion, or, to speak with the Apostle, not till he was declared to be the Son of God with power by his rising from the dead. And Paul appears to have been the first to view him in that way, because the earliest mention of him as the Son of God in that sense is in his Epistle to the Galatians 1:16. When it pleased God "to reveal his Son in me that I might preach him among the Gentiles," he there says, "immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." Acts 9:20 tells us that he began at once in the synagogues to proclaim Jesus as the Son of God. By the revelation of his Son in him he meant the manifestation of the spirit of Jesus to him on his way to Damascus, the reader will observe. Christ then became to him a fact of experience.

As Paul was the first to designate Jesus the Son of God in the spiritual sense, so he was the first to unify the Son with the Father in the work of salvation or redemption. "Because ye are sons," he says in Galatians 4:6, "God sent forth the spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying Abba, Father." The establishment of a filial relation by the grace of God was in his Son; not in Jesus as a person, but in his spirit, for the Apostle speaks not of the personality of his spirit, but of the spirit of his personality.

That was what the author of I John 5:11, 12 taught when he wrote, "God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son (that is, in our possession of the spirit of Jesus). He that hath the

Son (in that sense) hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God (in that sense) hath not the life." In other words, eternal life is the life God gives us when we receive the spirit of Jesus and manifest it to all about us. The teaching of the Apostle in these verses is similar to that in John 17:3, where the Fourth Evangelist says that to have eternal life is to know God and Jesus Christ whom he did send. Communion with the Father in union with the Son is meant in each case.

We have still to deal with the impersonal sonship. The expression must sound strange to some, and it may sound strange to many, because it is peculiar to a Hebrew way of thinking and speaking. It is characteristic only of certain parts of Scripture, and it is so peculiar that a pretty full account is required to make the explanation clear and complete.

When discussing the incarnation of Jesus, we found that the Logos or word of God in the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel was a personification, not a person. Though associated with God, and represented as his agent in the work of creation and regeneration, it is simply one of his attributes personified; and, though it is described as an only begotten from a father in John 1:14, it is his supreme attribute figuratively clothed with personal qualities. As shown in the fifth chapter of this work, it is the impersonal revelation of God, or that in him which reveals, creates, and recreates.

Son is personified in a similar way in some of the Epistles, where it is employed to represent that in

God which reveals his paternal character, and establishes a filial relation to him. The personification is so bold, however, that it has misled the great majority of New Testament interpreters. To most of them it has seemed that the writers meant it to denote a person, but that is demonstrably not the case. Failing to notice the origin of the passages, or failing to appreciate their figurative significance, and overlooking the fact that the more complete a personification is the more personal the language appears, they have almost universally been led astray.

One of the best examples of impersonal sonship is found in the first chapter of Hebrews, the opening part of which has already been explained. Having referred to the historical activity of a son in whom God spoke at the end of the days, the author proceeds in verses 2, 3 to describe him as one who was "the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance," and also as one "through whom he made the worlds," and "whom he appointed heir of all things." In the first three verses the Son is set forth, first, as existing on earth, next as preëxisting with God, and then as exalted at his right hand. We are concerned at present only with the second of these, that is, the preëxistent state.

Preëxistence is here asserted, though how or in what form we are not told; and the Son, who was just described as an organ of revelation, is now described as an agent in creation. Many interpreters have supposed the author meant that the Son existed from eternity as a person in the bosom

of the Father, but no such thought was ever in his mind. He simply employs Alexandrian phraseology to express Palestinian ideas. His language is borrowed from the Wisdom of Solomon, an Apocryphal writing and a production of the Alexandrian school.

In that book, chapter 7:26, Wisdom is described as "the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness," and in this Epistle the preëxistent Son is described in very similar terms. The word for effulgence or brightness is the same in both books, and the words translated image have the same meaning. Each of them signifies an exact expression or representation of something. Hence the description in the Epistle has its manifest origin in the book of Wisdom. Dr. Bernhard Weiss admits the correspondence between the two passages, and Professor Pfeleiderer asserts that the former passage rests upon the latter.³

Let us examine the passages more carefully and observe the similarities more minutely. "Everlasting light" is equivalent to divine "glory," and "the image of his goodness" is equivalent to "the very image of his substance"; for the glory of God is his inherent goodness or excellence, and his substance is his essential nature or character. There is not merely a close correspondence between the language of the Apocryphal writer and that of the Apostle, but the content of the idea in each case is identical.

³Paulinismus, Vol. II, p. 61, English translation.

Neither writer refers to a person, but both writers refer to a fundamental divine attribute. Each of them was thinking of that in God which can reveal him or make him known. In other words, it is that in him which is capable of giving a manifestation of his character such as rational beings can recognize. Both writers were thinking of a preëxistent attribute, not of a preëxistent person, the later no less than the earlier one; and, as Wisdom is personified in the Apocrypha, so Son is personified in the Epistle.

Then the Apostle describes the Son as the agent of God in creation, or as the one "through whom he made the worlds," to repeat his borrowed language; for this clause, like the former, was derived from an Alexandrian source. We have seen how God is said in the Fourth Gospel to have made all things *through* his Word, just as he is said in the book of Wisdom to have made all things *with* his Word, and that in a similar way and with an identical force; for in each book the term is clearly personified.

We have seen, too, that in the prologue of that Gospel Word and Son are identified in their preëxistent state. That portion of the fourteenth verse enclosed in parentheses—"We beheld its glory, glory as of an only begotten from a father"—refers to the preëxistent, and not to the manifested, state of the word. Most interpreters have overlooked that fact; but it is a fact none the less, as the context proves. The first part of the verse refers to Jesus

as the incarnate word, and this part refers to the character of the eternal word. Dr. Bernhard Weiss remarks in a special critical note that "here nothing else can be meant than the original divine glory of the Logos," which became uniquely incarnated in Jesus of Nazareth.

Quite generally overlooked also is another significant fact, namely, that Wisdom in that book, like Son in the Gospel, is designated the only begotten of God. In chapter 7:22 the writer says, "Wisdom, which is the worker of all things, taught me; for in her is an understanding spirit, holy, one only (*only begotten*),⁴ manifold, subtil, lively, clear, undefiled, plain, not subject to hurt, loving the thing that is good, quick, which cannot be letted (hindered), ready to do good." This verse is taken from the chapter in which Wisdom is described as the brightness of the everlasting light and the image of the divine goodness; and much more in the same strain might be reproduced.

Enough, however, has been quoted to show that Wisdom and Son are personified in those passages, that both are designated the only begotten of God, and that both are viewed as agents or instruments for executing his will. When Word in John and Son in Hebrews, therefore, are described as his agents in the work of creation, they are simply figurative expressions which represent personified powers in God, who made all things by the breath of his mouth; for "he spake and it was done; he

⁴ The Greek word is *μονογενής* in each book.

commanded, and it stood fast," as Psalm 33:9 says. He employed no agents or instruments external to himself.

Another good example of impersonal sonship is found in Colossians 1:15-17. There the Son is described as "the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist."

Here we have the same kind of teaching, expressed in very similar terms, and the explanation is rendered easy on that account. "The image of the invisible God" corresponds to "the image of his goodness" in Wisdom and to "the very image of his substance" in Hebrews; "in him were all things created" corresponds to "through whom he made the worlds"; and "in him all things consist" is parallel to "by (or in) his word all things consist" in Ecclesiasticus 43:26, which is the origin of the phrase. A different verb was employed by the Apostle, but the meaning of each verb is precisely the same.

Professor Kirkpatrick quotes this passage in his comment on Psalm 33:6—"By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made"—which, he admits, contains the germ of the doctrine of the word in the Prologue of John's Gospel. But his observation that "the psalmist had no idea of a personal word"

shows that in common with many other scholars he did not recognize the sameness of the thought. The Biblical writers did not think of a personal word. Such a notion was never entertained by a writer of Old or New Testament Scripture. Word is used impersonally in the Psalms and in the first Epistle of John, and is personified in the book of Wisdom, in the book of Ecclesiasticus, and in the Prologue of John's Gospel. And whenever a term is personified, it is impersonal, of course.

Son is called the image of God in Colossians, as it is in Hebrews, and as Wisdom is in the Apocrypha, which proves that both terms have the same meaning, and are used in the same sense. Son is here described as the element in which "all things consist" or stand together, and in Hebrews as that which upholds or sustains "all things"; but in Ecclesiasticus Word is described as that in which "all things consist" or lie together. So Son and Word are each regarded as the element in which all things hold together or stand firm.⁵ As the one is impersonal, the other must be. Like Word and Wisdom, Son is impersonal whenever it refers to a preëxistent state. Son, Word, and Wisdom, therefore, are all viewed as having preëxisted only in the character of God.

One more clause in this passage requires to be explained. Besides being described as the image of the invisible God, Son is called "the firstborn of all

⁵ Hold together is the rendering in the margin of the New Revision.

creation," an expression that implies both priority and precedence. The context shows, however, that in this passage it denotes priority rather than precedence, because verse 17 says, "He is before all things." Here, as in Hebrews 1:6, which speaks of God bringing the first-born into the world, the reference is to a begetting prior to his appearance on the earth. Each writer had in mind the pre-earthly state in which the Son was conceived to exist. There is no suggestion of supernatural generation, however, any more than in the case of Israel, who is called in Exodus 4:22 the first-born of Jehovah, or than in the case of the theocratic king, who is called in Psalm 89:27 the first-born of God. The term is here used impersonally, as Wisdom is used in the book of Proverbs and as Word is used in the Gospel according to John. This is a figurative mode of thought, but it is a Palestinian as well as an Alexandrian mode.

Thus there is no suggestion in these passages of essences or substances, much less is there any suggestion of persons in the sense of hypostases or subsistences. There is only one infinite Being, as the Apostle recognized when he described God in Ephesians 4:6 as "over all, and through all, and in all"; that is, as the one who pervades all things, and animates or energizes them. The sense of person was not attached to the word hypostasis, which appears in Hebrews 1:2, till after the Arian controversy commenced. Athanasius maintained that the three persons of the Trinity were of one sub-

stance and that there were three separate hypostases; but that idea is alien to both Old and New Testament thought.

A preëxistent person apart from the Deity is impossible, and an eternal Son is unthinkable to modern minds. The doctrine of eternal generation led Emmons, of New England, to declare that "eternal generation is eternal nonsense." There cannot be two eternal beings for the reason that an eternal being is infinite, and an infinite being inhabits eternity and occupies all space.

The Apostles did not conceive of the Son as distinct from God any more than the Fourth Evangelist conceived of the Word as distinct from him; but, as the preëxistent Word is that in him which creates and reveals, so the preëxistent Son is that in him which creates and reveals. It has been shown that Wisdom is called the only begotten of God in the Apocrypha, just as Word is called an only begotten from a father in the Fourth Gospel, and as Son is so called in the same Gospel; and, as Wisdom is impersonal in the preëxistent state, so is Son likewise. Only begotten is used of the Son in reference to his premundane state in John 3:16, 18 and in I John 4:9, as "beloved Son" is used in Matthew 3:17 of the historical Jesus, the eternal Son being that in God which, embodied in Jesus, made him the embodied Son, just as the eternal Word, incarnated in him, made him the incarnate Word.

Son in God, like Word in God, is that in him

which he is described in Scripture as sending out or sending forth. For example, the author of Psalm 147:18 says, "He sendeth out his word," which corresponds to what Paul says in Galatians 4:4: "When the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son." In each case the meaning is that God sent forth something of himself, because in each case it was God acting according to the good pleasure of his will.

Then what John 1:14 says of the Word becoming flesh is similar to what Hebrews 10:5 says of God preparing a body for the Son. In the former we have a contrast between the eternal Word and the incarnate Word, and in the latter a contrast between the eternal Son and the incarnate Son. Here, again, both are viewed as impersonal in the pre-earthly state, and as personal only in the earthly state.

The Biblical writers regard Son as they regard Word and as they regard Wisdom. Each of them represents that in God which accomplishes his purpose or executes his will. Each of them is described as a divine agent or agency, but not as a supernatural being, and similar language is employed in describing the activity of each. The author of Proverbs 8:30 makes Wisdom say, "When he marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was by him as a master workman; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him." That is analogous to calling both Word and Son his only begotten.

Most theologians have overlooked those facts. They have taken terms that express divine attri-

butes or agencies to mean personal and eternal beings, which is wholly contrary to Biblical modes of thought. Arius maintained that the Son was a super-angelic being, and Athanasius maintained that he was a supernatural person, coeternal, and coequal with the Father, though no such idea is found in the Scriptures.

He held, moreover, not only that the Son was an eternal and omnipotent person, but also that he was God. And the preëxistent Son was God in the sense in which John 1:1 declares that the Word was God, because, like the Word, the preëxistent Son was something of himself that could manifest his character. But only in that sense is the Son ever viewed as God, because the term is nowhere in Scripture used absolutely of anyone but the Supreme Being. As the word for person was originally used to denote an aspect of personality, that may have been what Athanasius tried to express when he said the Father is God, and the Son is God; but it is an unscriptural way of speaking and is confusing to the modern mind.

CHAPTER IX

THE CHRISTSHIP

Christ is the English translation of a Greek adjective, and signifies literally anointed. It corresponds to Messiah, which is an approximate transliteration of a Hebrew adjective that has a similar meaning. Hence a Christ or a Messiah is an anointed one, and the terms are synonymous, the former being the Greek equivalent of the latter.

Each term was originally used as a title, and each is applied in the Old Testament to a variety of persons. At the institution of the Tabernacle worship, on being anointed with holy oil, the high priest was styled the anointed one, as in Leviticus 4:3. Afterwards, at the institution of the kingly office, from the same mode of consecration, the title was given to Saul, who is frequently designated Jehovah's anointed, though the phrase is sometimes incorrectly rendered into English "the Lord's anointed," as in I Samuel 16:6 and in II Samuel 1:14.

This is what we may call the technical meaning of the term when used as a substantive, namely, a Hebrew king anointed of Jehovah to rule in Israel as his vicegerent. In that sense Saul was the first

Messiah, David was the second, Solomon was the third, Rehobohan was the fourth; and, while the Hebrew kingdom lasted, every rightly constituted Hebrew monarch was regarded as a Messiah or a Christ by Old Testament writers.

Although, when used as a substantive, the title is mostly confined to the kings of Israel, there was a tendency in later times to employ it in a wider sense. In Isaiah 45:1, for instance, Cyrus, king of Persia, is called Jehovah's Messiah on the principle that the title means one consecrated by Jehovah to be his agent or representative. He is the only foreign ruler mentioned in the Bible on whom it was ever bestowed. In Daniel 9:25 one called a prince is styled a Messiah on the same principle. In Psalm 2:2 it seems to be used of the ideal ruler the prophets expected to reunite the tribes of Israel and restore them to a position of power again. In Psalm 105:15 the plural is applied to the Hebrew patriarchs, not because they were actually anointed, but because they were supposed to bear the seal of a divine consecration.

When men yield to the spirit of God to do his will or perform some special work for him, they are viewed in Scripture as anointed by him or as consecrated to his service. In that metaphorical sense the author of Isaiah 61:1 regarded a Hebrew prophet as anointed when he wrote, "The spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me, because Jehovah hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek." In that sense, too, Jesus regarded himself as

anointed when, according to Luke 4:18-22, he read that prophetic passage, and applied the language to himself.

From the idea that one consecrated of God to be his agent or representative has been anointed by him the term may be applied to any person who seeks in an earnest way to extend the divine kingdom. It has been so applied by Lowell in his well-known poem on *The Ever Present Crisis*:

Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide
In the strife of truth with falsehood, for the good or evil side;
Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each the bloom
or blight,
Parts the goats upon the left hand and the sheep upon the
right,
And the choice goes by forever 'twixt that darkness and that
light.

Then in the Fourth Gospel the title is twice applied to Jesus—once in chapter 1:41, where Andrew says to Simon, "We have found the Messiah which is, being interpreted, Christ"; and once in chapter 4:25, where a woman of Samaria says to Jesus, "I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ." In each of these verses it is applied to him as the fulfiller of such passages in the Old Testament as were then taken to refer to the ideal ruler who was expected to deliver Israel from his enemies and restore the nation to prosperity and power.

This ideal ruler is always represented by the prophets as a temporal prince. In Isaiah 9:6, which is the first passage that speaks of him, and it is

typical of the others, he is pictured as a divinely appointed prince and governor, who should sit on the throne of David to establish his kingdom, and to uphold it with justice and righteousness. The appellation given to him consists of a number of descriptive epithets expressing the qualities of his government. Translated literally, the description in Hebrew would read, "His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Divine Hero, Father of Eternity, Prince of Peace." Such honorific titles were assumed by ancient Babylonian and Egyptian monarchs, and similar ones are found in old inscriptions that remain. They should be understood as constituting a single name and must not be interpreted in a metaphysical sense.

Jesus was not a governor, however, and did not sit on the throne of David, nor did he establish his kingdom, much less did he restore the nation to a position of power and prosperity. Hence the foregoing titles have no significance, so far as he is concerned. They are not applicable to him, nor are they applied to him in the Gospels; and it is worth remarking that in the Septuagint translation from which most of the New Testament quotations are taken only one of them is found. This ancient translation says, "His name is called Messenger of mighty Counsel." That is the single title it gives him, which shows that the list of epithets in Hebrew was added to the Massoretic text after the Captivity in Babylon, as it was not in the manuscript from which the Alexandrian version was made.

Only two of the prophetic passages that foreshadow an ideal ruler are applied to Jesus by the Evangelists, and both of them occur in the Gospel according to Matthew. The first of these is taken from Micah 5:2, and refers to the birthplace of the Coming One. The quotation in Matthew 2:6, which agrees neither with the Greek nor with the Hebrew, reads as follows: "Thou Bethlehem, land of Judah, art in no wise least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come forth a governor, which shall be shepherd of my people Israel." These words have reference to the advent of an ideal ruler belonging to the house of David; but the writer was thinking of a political governor, and not of a religious prophet, such as Jesus of Nazareth was.

The second is a part of Zechariah 9:9, which describes the lowly character of the Coming One. As paraphrased in Matthew 21:5, the part quoted reads, "Tell ye the daughter of Zion, behold, thy king coming unto thee, meek, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." Matthew says this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet; but neither Mark nor Luke refers to that passage, nor does either of them take any notice of the prophecy.

The words just quoted show that the object of the Evangelist was to exhibit the meek and lowly character of Jesus as a prince of peace, which in a spiritual sense he was, though there was no thought of him in the mind of the writer; and they were applied to him, not as a ruler or governor, but as a

prophet or preacher of righteousness. And the crowds that formed the procession are said to have so regarded him; for in verse 11 Matthew reports the multitude as exclaiming, "This is the prophet, Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee."

There is no reference to Jesus in the prophecy, because the prophet was thinking of another man or of a different kind of man, the result of whose advent is stated in the next verse. In the name of Jehovah he says, "I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off; and he shall speak peace unto the nations: and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth." There the ruler foreshadowed was expected to procure peace for his people, not by the sword of the spirit, but with the weapons of war. All of which proves that he was not thinking of the prophet of Nazareth.

Because of the expectation created by them, such prophecies of an ideal ruler led the Jews to look for a deliverer who would correspond to the general descriptions given of him, that is, for a purely temporal ruler; and because he realized in a special way some features of the description, many of the earlier followers of Jesus shared that expectation, supposing him to be the one the prophets had in mind. A few passages in the Gospels which show that some of the Twelve Apostles, as well as other disciples, looked upon him as a temporal ruler may be adduced.

Peter spoke of him in the Old Testament sense, when at Caesarea Philippi he uttered the confession found in Matthew 16:16, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Son of God being a recognized title of the Messiah that was suggested by the second Psalm. James and John viewed him as a temporal ruler when they made their ambitious request, recorded in Mark 10:37, "Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and one on thy left hand, in thy glory," referring to a state of earthly glory which they expected him shortly to assume. The two disciples on the road to Emmaus thought of him in a similar way when they said to each other, as reported in Luke 24:21, "We hoped that it was he which should redeem Israel," that is, deliver the nation from the yoke of Rome.

These passages suggest that very many in his day regarded him as the conquering prince the prophets had led the Jews to expect as the fulfiller of their national hopes. And the question recorded by Luke in Acts 1:6, "Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" proves that a belief in his temporal Messiahship persisted among the Apostles for some time after his death, for the inquiry indicates the earthly character of the views they still entertained with respect to him.

Though he had told them plainly, if not repeatedly, that his kingdom was not of this world, and that it would not come with observation or outward show, yet they continued to look upon him as a national deliverer who would establish a visible

kingdom on the earth. He introduced a reign of justice and righteousness, it is true, but not by becoming a monarch nor by ascending a throne; and he extended the kingdom of God throughout Palestine by spiritual, not by political, means, as the prophets had led the Jews to expect. In this connection it may be stated that the ideal ruler they foreshadowed has never appeared, though Zerubabel partially fulfilled their prophecies, and, of course, no such ruler will ever appear now. Most of the Jews throughout the world have long since abandoned all hope of his appearance.

Jesus was a prophet, not a ruler nor a prince; much less was he a king. He was anointed to preach the Gospel of the kingdom to his people, and he did all he could to extend it; but he was not sent to exercise political authority over them. Luke reports Peter as saying in Acts 5:31, to the members of the Sanhedrin, that God exalted him to be a prince and a savior, but the context shows that he referred to the spirit of the crucified Jesus, not to Jesus himself; and the word translated prince means rather a leader or guide than a ruler or prince. It is rendered guide in the Twentieth Century New Testament.

As Jesus was not a Messiah in the historic sense of being an earthly ruler, nor in the prophetic sense of being an ideal ruler, he cannot have used the title of himself; and it is significant that each Synoptist reports him as disclaiming the title. According to Matthew 16:20, after Peter had made his famous

confession, Jesus charged the Disciples that they should tell no man that he was the Christ; according to Mark 3:11, when the unclean spirits addressed him as the Son of God, he charged them also that they should not make him known; and, according to Luke 4:41, when the demons so addressed him, he rebuked them, and suffered them not to speak.

Why did Jesus charge the Disciples that they should tell no man that he was the Christ, the Son of the living God? There were three reasons, at least, all of which are weighty and worthy of consideration. The first is, the statement was untrue, as he was not a Christ in the sense in which the title was then understood. The second is, such a report, being untrue, would have been misleading to his followers. The third is, the report, being misleading, would have brought him into conflict with the Roman authorities.

For the same reasons he forbade those possessed of evil spirits to proclaim that he was the Son of God. Some scholars have suggested that he suffered not the demons to speak of him as Christ the Son of God, because he refused to receive such testimony from unclean spirits. But that is an unreasonable suggestion. Demoniacal possession was an unscientific way of describing maladies, such as epilepsy or insanity, that were different from ordinary diseases; and it was the diseased men, not the imaginary demons, that spoke. Jesus refused to receive their testimony, because he was not a Messiah in their sense of the term.

Matthew 1:16 states that Jesus was called Christ, but he did not call himself Christ, nor did he wish others so to designate him. On the contrary, he disavowed any claim to the title. He declined to have it used of him, because it had a political connotation. He knew that it denoted a temporal ruler or a literal governor, which he was not, and did not wish to be. He knew, too, that to use it of himself, or to allow others to use it of him, would excite suspicion and hostility, and subject him to criticism and opposition. His acceptance of the title would have been unsafe, as well as misleading to his followers and contrary to fact. Therefore, knowing what the effect of publishing a false report would be, he tried to prevent it from being spread abroad.

That circulating the report would have accelerated the movement against him and hastened his arrest is proved by the account Luke 23:2 gives of his accusation before Pilate. According to that account, he was accused on the ground of perverting the people and claiming to be the Christ, which was a maliciously false charge. The indictment reads, "We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ a king." The form of the accusation shows that those who made it understood the term Christ just as many disciples understood it, as well as proves that the circulation of the report at an earlier period would have hastened his arrest.

His previous condemnation by the Sanhedrin would have availed nothing with Pilate, because blasphemy was a matter about which he had no concern; but, as the Roman procurator of Judaea, a charge of perverting the people, of fomenting an insurrection, and of claiming to be Christ a king, was to him a very serious matter. That was the charge on which his enemies procured his conviction of treason and his condemnation to death. As he could not consistently have made claims for himself that were false, so he could not consistently have allowed false claims for him to be made. Neither could he consistently have done what he knew would needlessly jeopardize his life and prematurely terminate his work.

If Jesus was not a Christ in the sense of being either an actual or an ideal ruler, in what sense can the term be applied to him? The answer is contained in John 18:37. When Pilate asked him, "Art thou a king then?" Jesus answered, "Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth."

In the preceding verse he is represented as saying, "My kingdom is not of this world." So his answer shows that, when he admitted the possession of kingly authority, he meant dominion over the hearts of men, which is a purely spiritual dominion. He sought simply to rule their spirits; and, as he came to bear witness to the truth, his sovereignty is only in the realm of mind. His power over men arises

not from the arbitrary exercise of physical force, but from the moral might of spiritual truth.

The sense in which John 18:37 represents him as admitting kingship suggests the meaning of his admission in Matthew 26:64 of Messiahship. When Pilate adjured him to tell whether he was the Christ, the Son of God or not, "Jesus saith unto him, thou hast said"; and Mark 14:62 reports him as saying, "I am." Then follows a peculiar utterance: "Henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power (that is, of God, the Almighty), and coming on the clouds of heaven."

Son of Man, as previously explained, is an Apocalyptic expression, borrowed from the book of Enoch, where it denotes a superhuman being that is sometimes described as sitting on "a throne of glory," a phrase that corresponds to sitting at the right hand of power or the right hand of God in the Gospels. Son of Man, like Son of God, is a Messianic title which is often applied to Jesus by the Evangelists; but neither phrase was used by him, nor was the former ever applied to him till after he became a spirit; and whenever he is made to speak of sitting at the right hand of God or of coming on the clouds of heaven, the reference is always to his spirit.

Early in this chapter it was stated that only two prophetic passages that foreshadow an ideal ruler are applied to Jesus by the Evangelists. If the reader will take the trouble to look, he will find that, as a rule, it is those passages which illustrate the work of a prophet that are applied to him.

Matthew, for instance, who sought specially to show how the life of Jesus had fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament, applies freely certain portions which refer to the Israelites as a prophetic people, or those which refer to the Servant of Jehovah, which was the pious part of the nation.

Some familiar examples may be cited: "Out of Egypt did I call my son," chapter 2:15, which is quoted from Hosea 11:1, where it refers to Israel; "Himself took our infirmities and bare our diseases," chapter 8:17, which is taken from Isaiah 53:4, and refers to the Servant of Jehovah; "Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved in whom my soul is well pleased; I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall declare judgment to the Gentiles," chapter 12:18. This and the following three verses are all quoted from Isaiah 42:1-4, and refer also to the Servant of Jehovah.

Mark does not apply any passage from the Prophets to Jesus, but in chapter 12:36 he applies the first verse of Psalm 110, which is a divine oracle, addressed to a theocratic king who was also a priest after the order of Melchizedek. To bring out the meaning of the original it should be translated, "The Lord (Jehovah) said unto my lord (the king), Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet." This verse is likewise applied to him in Matthew 22:44 and in Luke 20:42, 43.

Only one direct quotation from the Prophets is made by Luke, and that is Isaiah 61:1, 2, which

describes the mission of a prophet, and which, according to chapter 4:21, Jesus applied to himself as descriptive of his own mission. The passage having already been quoted in full, there is no need to quote it again.

Most of these quotations have no reference to the Messiah in the Old Testament, nor have they any personal reference to Jesus. They are simply applied to him because they each contain a principle that he fulfilled in some particular way. For, as Wesley in his note on Matthew 2:17 observes, "A passage of Scripture, whether prophetic, historical, or poetical, is in the language of the New Testament fulfilled, when an event happens to which it may with great propriety be accommodated." This method of using Scripture is known as accommodated application, and was one that had long been employed by Jewish teachers. Hence the Evangelists merely adopted a method that was universally recognized among the Jews.

We may now perceive the sense in which Jesus was a Messiah. The passage he applied to himself and the other passages applied to him make it very plain. He regarded himself as a prophet, anointed and endowed of God to proclaim his truth and interpret his will to men; and in the same way the Evangelists regarded him. That is what John 4:19 says the woman of Samaria took him to be when she called him a prophet; and that is how John meant him to be taken when in the twenty-sixth verse he made him admit his Messiahship, for the

purpose of the Fourth Gospel is to show that Jesus is Christ, the Son of God, in a special spiritual sense.

Besides being conceived as an ideal ruler, the Coming One whom the prophets foreshadowed is described as a wonderful counselor in Isaiah 9:6 and in Isaiah 11:2. The latter reads, "The Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah." Jesus realized the prophetic ideal in its moral aspects to a degree that made him the sublimest personality that has appeared in human history; but it was his intellectual and religious qualities, not his ruling or governing qualities, that made him the spiritual Christ of God.

Thus, while the Disciples looked upon him as a temporal Messiah up to the time of his departure, they came afterwards to see that he had been a spiritual, not a political, Christ. How long after his death before they appreciated the true character of his Messiahship we do not know; but Acts 1:6—"Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"—suggests that they continued for a while to dream of the establishment of an earthly kingdom through his instrumentality.

Peter was, perhaps, the first to realize his spiritual Messiahship. For so thinking there are two reasons: first, because in his address on the day of Pentecost, as recorded in Acts 2:36, he assured the men of Judaea and the dwellers of Jerusalem that God had made the Jesus whom they had crucified

“both Lord and Christ”; second, because, according to verse 38, he exhorted them, saying, “Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins.”

Careful readers will notice that it is the spirit of Jesus that God appointed to be both Lord and Christ. In the days of his flesh he was called Master and Teacher, but here a new way of speaking of him is employed. They will also notice that, while in the body, he was viewed as the Christ or the Anointed One, the word with the article being the original form, but that he is now described as Jesus Christ, the former being a title and the latter a proper name. They should further notice that those present were exhorted to be baptized in the name (literally, on the name) of Christ; that is, on his name as the ground of their confession, which means in virtue of the character he exhibited during his life on earth.

But the most important thing to be noted in this connection is that Christ was not used as a proper name till after Jesus was crucified, when his followers came to see that he had been a spiritual, not a temporal, Messiah. And it is an interesting fact that Paul, the earliest New Testament writer, uses the proper name, and not the title, to designate his spirit, speaking interchangeably of “Christ” and “Jesus Christ.” Other Apostolic writers employ the same forms of speech when referring to his spirit. Such forms are numerous in the Epistles, but a few examples may be given.

In the introduction to his letters Paul styles himself "an Apostle of Jesus Christ," as Peter does in his; and he greets the Thessalonian Christians in the name of "God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." James styles himself "a servant of God," as also does Paul in his letter to Titus, "and of the Lord Jesus Christ"; and Jude introduces himself as "a servant of Jesus Christ." The writer of First John affirms that his "fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ"; and the writer of Second John prays that "grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ" may be with all who know the truth. Paul prays in similar terms for the churches of Galatia. The author of the Apocalypse entitles his book "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass"; and the author of Hebrews declares in chapter 13:8 that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and to-day and forever."

All these writers regard Jesus as having been a spiritual Christ, whose value to us is moral, not metaphysical, and they all employ the proper name when speaking of his spirit. That is to say, they speak of his spirit as Christ, as Christ Jesus, as Jesus Christ, or as the Lord Jesus Christ. It is his spirit which Paul associates with God the Father, so that an Apostle could call himself an Apostle of God or an Apostle of Christ, and a servant of God or a servant of Christ. In most of his Epistles Paul describes himself as an Apostle of Jesus Christ

through the will of God, which means by divine appointment, or in accordance with the divine will, and which shows that God was the author of his call to the apostleship.

When the Apostles associate the spirit of Christ with God in the work of calling, or blessing, or saving, they unify Christ with God, but do not identify them. God is always conceived as the author or originator, and Christ as his agent or instrument. The association of the two is general, and the combination of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ is frequent; but by all the writers they are conceived as different and distinct. God is viewed as the Father or the God and Father of Christ, as is shown by Romans 15:6, II Corinthians 1:3, Ephesians 1:3, I Peter 1:3, and Christ is viewed as his spiritual representative. Many interpreters have erred in identifying them, because they are never identified in the New Testament. On the contrary, though united in action, they are always kept distinct in thought.

Great exegetes have been misled by overlooking the truth of that statement, or by failing to appreciate its full significance. Many scholars, critical and uncritical, have reasoned thus: The spirit of Christ is the Spirit of God; therefore Christ is God. But the major premise, or the proposition here laid down, is false. The spirit of Christ is only a part of the Spirit of God, the one being finite, the other infinite. Jesus Christ is the name the Apostles used to describe the spirit which Jesus possessed, and

which he transmitted to his followers when he went to the Father, or that part of the infinite Spirit which filled him and made him what he was, the spiritual Christ of God. But his spirit differs from the holy Spirit as a human spirit differs from the divine Spirit.

His separateness and subordinateness, which are everywhere assumed, are explicitly expressed by Paul. God is the head of Christ, he says in I Corinthians 11:3; Christ belongs to God, he says in chapter 3:23; in chapter 1:30 he says that, through our union with God in Christ Jesus, he is made unto us, or becomes to us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. And Revelation 11:15 speaks of "our Lord and his Christ." Everything Christ is said to be to us or do for us has a divine origin. It comes from a divine source. What he does not only originates with God, but also takes place in accordance with his will. Therein lies the force of the declaration in Hebrews 13:8: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." His agency is eternally the same, because it is always active and operative in harmony with the unchangeable character of God and the immutable principles of the divine administration.

While Jesus Christ is, as explained, the agent or instrument of God in a deep, divine sense, Christ stands for the spirit of anointing, and represents that in God which anoints to office, especially the office of prophet, priest, or king. In other words, it is that element in him which renders men sacred

to him through their devotion to his will, so that they do something for him in the work of revelation and redemption. On that principle the patriarchs were styled Jehovah's anointed or consecrated ones by the author of Psalm 105:15, as was previously shown. By virtue of that fact the Christ-spirit pervades the Old Testament, so that in the developed portions, such as the second part of Isaiah, we have Christianity before the Gospel.

That is why the Apostle Peter speaks in his First Epistle, chapter 1:11, of the spirit of Christ in the Prophets. In its note on that verse the *Critical Commentary* rightly says, "The spirit of Christ was in the Prophets, but not manifestly, as in the case of the Christian Church and its first preachers." It came from God, however, for the reason that the spirit of Christ is that in him which inspires and reveals, as well as that which anoints or consecrates; and, though they did not understand it fully, the spirit that inspired them was peculiarly the Christ-spirit. In that sense devout Mohammedans believe in Christ.

Some scholars have asserted that Christ, meaning Jesus Christ, is Christianity, and in a certain sense that is true; for, though practically it is a way of life, fundamentally, or in its essence, it is a spirit. Christianity is Christ-ianity, or the Christ-spirit expressed in thought, in speech, in life. It is the spirit that reveals the truth and interprets the will of God. But it was in God before it was in man, either in Jesus or in any other being. It was imperfectly

expressed in the life and teaching of the Prophets; it was completely expressed in the life and teaching of Jesus; and it is partially expressed in the character and conduct of all good men. It was always in God, however, and has always come from him.

Since Christ is fundamentally something in the character of God, that fact enables us to explain one of the most peculiar passages in the New Testament. In Philippians 2:5-8 Paul says to his readers, as the margin renders, "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus (the man); who, being originally (or, at the beginning) in the form of God, counted it not a thing to be grasped to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross."

Few passages of Scripture have been more seriously disputed or more sadly misunderstood, for it could not mean what most interpreters have taken it to mean. To understand it rightly we should notice that two different states of existence are here mentioned, namely, the earthly and the pre-earthly state. From "being originally in the form of God" to "being made in the likeness of men" refers to the pre-earthly state of Jesus; from "being found in fashion as a man" to "the death of the cross" refers to his earthly state, as does also the exhortation in verse 5.

The former portion of the verse describes the state

he had before he assumed the latter state. When it is said that he emptied himself, the words express a transition from the one state to the other, Paul having meant that he abdicated the first in assuming the second. He is said to have been originally, or at the beginning, in the form of God, because he is conceived by the Apostle and the Fourth Evangelist as having always existed in the nature of God.

That was the state, the reader will remember, in which Christ is said in Colossians 1:15 to have been "the image of the invisible God." But Paul knew as well as we that God has no form. Hence being in the form of God and being the image of God are equivalent terms, and each denotes a quality or mode of existence. In each case the Apostle meant that Christ preëxisted as that in God which could manifest his divine perfections, especially his attributes of kindness and faithfulness.

So we may see that it was not Jesus that is said to have emptied himself, but Christ, or that in God which became incarnate in Jesus. And the self-emptying consisted in not counting equality with God a thing to be grasped, or tenaciously seized, and in taking the form or assuming the nature of a servant. Rightly understood, therefore, there is no hint here of surrendering anything, because the self-emptying is viewed simply as a change of form or a change of state.

The thought in this passage is similar to that in John 17:5, where Jesus is made to say, "Now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with

the glory which I had with thee before the world was." As there, so here, Jesus is conceived as having preëxisted as glory, which is the manifesting side of the divine nature. That is what Meyer calls the *λόγος ἄσαρκος*, that is, the fleshless and eternal Logos which existed from the beginning with God. To that state the spirit of Jesus is said to have gone after performing his work as a servant, and submitting to death on the cross.

The following verses describe the exaltation given him of God in consequence of, or by reason of, his self-humiliation, self-humbling being the duty the Apostle here enjoins upon his brethren: "Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Thus in this Epistle, as in Hebrews 1:3 and John 17:5, Jesus is conceived first as something sent forth from God to become man; next as a man glorifying God on the earth; and then as a spirit glorified by him and exalted to a place at his right hand. The phrase, "being made in the likeness of men," corresponds to "born of a woman" in Galatians 4:4, to "born of the seed of David according to the flesh" in Romans 1:3, and to "the word became flesh" in John 1:14. This passage resembles closely II Corinthians 8:9: "Though he was rich (in the pre-earthly state), yet for your sakes he became poor."

There, as here, the possession of premundane dignity is said to have been abandoned by Christ on his assumption of humanity. The ideas with respect to preëxistence in these passages are identical, for each one speaks of something eternally in God that became embodied in a human being.

A few more paragraphs are necessary to make the explanation complete. "Being in the form of God" in this passage is similar to being "the image of God" in Colossians 1:15, it has been shown, and to being "the effulgence of his glory" in Hebrews 1:2, it should be noticed. The idea is that Christ preëxisted in God as Wisdom, Word, and Son preëxisted in him, because the preëxistence of each is described in almost the same terms. John 17:5 describes Christ as sharing glory with God "before the world was"; Proverbs 8:23 describes Wisdom as set up "from the beginning, before ever the earth was"; John 1:2 describes Word as being in "the beginning with God"; and Colossians 1:17 describes Son as being "before all things."

Then, referring to agency, John 1:3 says that all things were made through the Word; Colossians 1:16 says that all things were created through the Son; and Ephesians 3:9 says that God created all things "by Jesus Christ." The last three words are not in the Revised Version, but they are found in the original of the Authorized Version; and their presence in some manuscripts shows how they might be used, as well as how they should be understood, for the same descriptions are given and the same predica-

tions may be made of all three terms. They are all God in the same impersonal sense; and he is the one by whom all things come into existence, as I Corinthians 8:6 declares.

When the Apostle says that Christ did not deem equality with God a thing to be grasped, his words do not imply mental action in the previous state, nor do the words in John 17:5—"The glory which I had with thee before the world was"—imply mental action. There cannot be mental action in a personified object or in a personified attribute. In each passage we have a mode of speech that was characteristic of the Biblical writers and familiar to their readers. The language should be taken as we take the description in Proverbs 8:30, where wisdom is made to say, "I was by him (Jehovah) as a master workman; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him."

Christ is said to have abandoned a mode of existence, not a conscious state, on becoming a man and taking the form of a servant; and, as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient unto death on the cross. His whole life on earth was one of voluntary obedience to the divine will. There is no suggestion here of the doctrine of Kenosis, or the self-limitation of Christ on becoming incarnate. Jesus himself did not leave anything, nor lay aside anything. He did not divest himself of anything he had consciously possessed, much less empty himself of any knowledge he once had. No being could conceivably do that. One may will not to look or

not to learn, but one cannot will not to see or not to know; and the Apostle does not suggest anything so unreasonable.

Nor is there any suggestion here of hypostatic preëxistence, or the doctrine that Christ preëxisted as a person or a distinct individual subsistence. The notion of hypostatic preëxistence is utterly alien to the thought of the Apostle, and there is no trace of such a thought in the New Testament. Hence the essential deity of Christ is an idea of which Christian people should rid themselves. To those who do not discriminate that may appear to be Arianism or Socinianism, but it is neither the one nor the other. On the contrary, it is the plain meaning of this passage. It is not apparent heresy, but positive duty, to interpret the Apostle properly and try to get his meaning understood. Nothing could preëxist with God but that which is a part of him, because there is no plurality in Deity. This has been called a state of ideal preëxistence, but it is rather a state of impersonal preëxistence, as in the case of Word and Son.

Confirmatory of what has been said is the statement in I Corinthians 10:4. There, alluding to the act of Moses in cleaving a rock to provide water for the Israelites, as recorded in Exodus 17:1-6, the Apostle says that the spiritual rock which followed them was Christ. Now that which accompanied them was not Jesus Christ, but the Christ-spirit which was eternally in God, or that element in his nature which is present at all times in the Church,

under whatever form it may be manifested. Hence we may speak of the eternal Christ and the incarnate Christ, as we may speak of the eternal Son and the incarnate Son, or of the eternal Word and the incarnate Word; but always bearing in mind that both Christ and Son and Word are eternal only in God, and then only in a spiritual and impersonal sense.

God is a self-manifesting Being, and he manifests himself, as he fulfils himself, in many ways. In the universe the heavens declare his glory and the firmament shows his handiwork. But in the Scriptures he is said to manifest himself also through his Word, through his Son, and through his Christ. Fundamentally, these three principles are conceived as existing in him as elements in his nature, or as attributes of his character; and they are described as performing similar functions for him, some of them being exactly the same.

For that reason they cannot be strictly differentiated. While that is the case, however, a slight difference may be indicated and a partial differentiation made. In general, one may say, Word is that in Deity which represents his revealing attribute, and shows that he is an intelligent Being, or a God of wisdom; Christ is that in him which represents his redeeming attribute, and shows that he is a merciful Being, or a God of grace; Son is that in him which represents his loving attribute, and shows that he is a benevolent Being, or a God of love.

CHAPTER X

THE SAVIORSHIP

Of all the aspects of his person or features of his work the saviorship of Jesus is the one most strongly stressed by preachers of the Gospel and most frequently mentioned by members of the Church. And yet the sense in which he is a savior and the way in which he saves are still imperfectly apprehended and unscripturally explained.

In the chapter on his religion it was shown that Jesus was not regarded as distinctively a savior during his sojourn on the earth. To the Disciples God was the savior, as he was to the Prophets, as he was to the Jews, and as he was to the Evangelists and Apostles. God is everywhere regarded as the absolute savior throughout the entire Scriptures.

The word savior occurs but twice in the Synoptic Gospels, it was shown, and each time in the account given by Luke. In chapter 1:46, 47 Mary is reported as saying, "My soul doth magnify the Lord (that is, the Lord God), and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour"; and in chapter 2:11 an angel is said to have told the shepherds that to them was born "a saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

Here, as was also stated, Mary calls God her Lord

and Savior, and the angel speaks of her new-born child as both Savior and Lord. These passages prove to us two things. One is that the account in Luke is very late, first, because the hymn of Mary, known as the *Magnificat*, and the story of the angel are not found in the other Gospels; secondly, because Jesus did not call himself a savior, nor was he called a savior during the period of his public ministry; and, thirdly, because the title "Lord" with a capital letter, which is the Greek rendering of Jehovah, was not used of him in a spiritual sense till after he became a spirit, and it is commonly applied to him as a spirit in the Pauline Epistles.

Another thing proved by these passages is that Jesus is viewed by the Evangelist as an anointed Savior and Lord. He was born a child that was destined to become a savior through the anointing of God; for the word rendered "Christ" in the second passage is an appellative, and the clause should be translated, "A savior, which is an anointed Lord," as is suggested in the margin of the New Revision. The combination here occurs nowhere else in the New Testament.

As a savior who was also an anointed Lord, Jesus was a savior in an instrumental sense, for the anointing signifies that the one so consecrated was an agent or instrument of God in the duties he was appointed to discharge, or the work he was expected to perform. An anointed king was supposed to be a savior as well as a ruler in a temporal sense, redemption or deliverance being one of the functions of his

office. The Evangelists show, however, that Jesus was anointed to be a spiritual, not a temporal, deliverer. He came to seek and to save that which was lost, as Luke 19:10 reports him to have said.

Matthew 1:21 represents an angel as saying to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins"; and Luke 1:76, 77 reports Zacharias as saying with respect to the infant John, "Thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Most High; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to make ready his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people in the remission of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the dayspring from on high shall visit us." These passages prove two more things.

The first is that, as Moses was raised up to deliver his people from the bondage of servitude, so Jesus was raised up to deliver his people from the bondage of sin; or, as Joshua was appointed to save them from their national enemies, so Jesus was anointed to save them from their spiritual foes.

The second thing is that he should accomplish his work of redemption instrumentally, that is, by acting as a prophet to his people, to give them a conscious knowledge of salvation in the remission of their sins. Since God alone can forgive sins, and then only as they are regretted and abandoned, the idea is that Jesus was his instrument in bringing men to practical repentance and faith, by which are meant a changed habit of thought and a changed

manner of life, manifested in personal devotion to the divine will.

That explanation is confirmed by the language of verses 68, 69, where Zacharias blesses the God of Israel, because "He hath visited and wrought redemption for his people, and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David." The word "horn" is here used as a symbol of strength or power, so that a "horn of salvation" is a metaphorical expression meaning a power of salvation, or a "salvation-bringing" force.

It is equivalent in meaning to a mighty savior, being a direct quotation from II Samuel 22:3. There David praises Jehovah for having delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies and of the hand of Saul, saying, "God is my rock, in him will I take refuge; my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge; my Saviour, thou savest me from violence." As God in his protecting providence saved David from violence, so through the preaching of the Gospel and the instrumentality of Jesus he saves men from sin.

The explanation is further confirmed by the language of chapter 2:29-32, where in the so-called *Nunc Dimittis* Simeon blesses God, and says, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart, O Lord, according to thy word, in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples; a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." This song also

is composed of phrases borrowed and adapted from the Old Testament.

In Isaiah 46:13 the redemption promised was to be wrought by Jehovah through the instrumentality of Cyrus, for the Hebrew people; in these verses the redemption described was to be wrought by him through the instrumentality of Jesus, not merely for one people, but for all peoples. Each passage implies an inward, spiritual work of grace which would draw the nation nearer to God; but this supposes a closer relation to him than that implied in the prophecy, because the process supposed a greater knowledge of his will and a fuller operation of his Spirit.

Thus in the Synoptic Gospels Jesus is described as an instrumental savior, like Moses or Joshua, but in a deeper sense and to a richer experience. The salvation he offered was personal and spiritual, and was as much higher than that effected by Cyrus as spiritual is higher than temporal deliverance. The salvation he offered was also more comprehensive, embracing as it did the whole world in its scope. In this connection it may be observed that, throughout his entire ministry, he proved himself a savior, as his name implies, by freeing all who would follow him from their sins, through instructing them with his truth, and imbuing them with his spirit, and inspiring them with his life.

In the Fourth Gospel the word savior occurs only once, and that is in chapter 4:42, which represents certain Samaritans as saying to the woman whose

testimony concerning Jesus had led some to believe on him, and others to come and hear him, "Now we believe, not because of thy speaking; for we have heard for ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world."

The last clause expresses the thought of the writer, not that of the speakers, who cannot possibly have uttered it, as no such idea was entertained by those who listened to the Great Teacher in the days of his flesh. The phrase occurs in only one other place, and that is in I John 4:14, which proves that it expresses the author's thought. "It is certainly put into the mouth of the people by the Evangelist," as Dr. Bernhard Weiss observes respecting it here, and as others had observed before him.

If the reader will reflect a moment, he will see that what Weiss says is true. Let him remember that these men were in the company of Jesus for only two days, and that they could not have reached such a conclusion in so short a time. The Disciples did not arrive at that truth, or attain to that belief, in three years. They regarded him as a national, not a spiritual, Messiah; and nothing he said or did led them to think of him as the savior of the world. Up to the last week of his life they expected him to establish an earthly kingdom; and the superscription placed above him on the cross was, "This is Jesus the king of the Jews," though he was not a king, and did not claim to be.

The idea that Jesus was a savior in other than an instrumental sense was not conceived till after his

crucifixion and ascension, and Peter appears to have been the first one to conceive it. In his address before the Jewish Council, as reported in Acts 5:30, he said, "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, hanging him on a tree. Him did God exalt at his right hand to be a prince (or leader) and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins."

It is the spirit of the crucified Jesus, not Jesus himself, that Peter called a savior. It was only after his exaltation that the Apostles recognized his saviorship in the representative sense of the term. While he was with them, they did not appreciate his mission. They knew that he was a great prophet or teacher, as well as a great healer and helper; they knew, too, that he spoke and lived as no other man had spoken and lived; but they did not know how much more than a prophet he was, nor how much more than a healer and helper he was ordained to be.

On considering what he had been and done, however, especially on discovering what his spirit could be and do, they came to realize its divine significance in relation to mankind. They soon began to see that he had been "the leader of life," as Acts 3:15, literally rendered, styles him, that is, a leader and exemplar of the true eternal life, and that the possession of his spirit inspired them with that life. Then it was they appear to have unified his spirit with the divine Spirit, perceiving it to be the same in kind; and thenceforth they regarded it as repre-

sentative of the divine Spirit in the work of redemption.

Some such process of reasoning may be conjectured from the reports recorded in the book of Acts, and the account Paul gives of his conversion from Judaism in the first chapter of Galatians corroborates the probability of that conjecture. When it pleased God to reveal his Son in him, through the manifestation of the spirit of Jesus, Paul was led to regard his spirit as the savior, because, as stated in the fourth verse, he "gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil world." His ministry as an Apostle was based on the conviction that the spirit which arrested him on the way to Damascus was representative of the divine Spirit, and of the spirit that saves men from sin.

Thus to Paul, as to Peter and the other Apostles, the spirit of Jesus, being the same in kind as the divine Spirit, became the element of deliverance from temptation and vice, and a representative savior in the sense of representing that in God which saves. By him, as by them, moreover, his spirit was unified with the divine Spirit; so that, while the author of I John 4:15 would say, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God," Paul could say, as he does in Galatians 2:20, "I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me," though both Apostles spoke of a similar experience, and both viewed the Son as a savior in the very same sense.

When it is said that both viewed Christ as a savior

in the same sense, it should be added that all the other Apostles viewed him just as they did, for to all of them he was simply the representative savior. Throughout the whole Bible, the New Testament no less than the Old, God is everywhere regarded as the only spiritual Savior, or Savior from sin, and it is his divine action on men that leads them to feel and confess their guilt. Speaking in his name, the author of Isaiah 45:21 makes Jehovah say, "There is no God else besides me, a just God and a Saviour; there is none besides me." From the time the prophet uttered that declaration no Jewish writer ever questioned either his sole deity or his sole saviorship.

Numerous examples from the Epistles might be given, but only the more significant passages need be adduced. In I Timothy 1:1 Paul calls himself an Apostle of Christ Jesus by the appointment of "God our Saviour"; in chapter 2:3, 4 he describes a tranquil and quiet life as "good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who willeth that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth"; in chapter 4:10 he says, "We have our hope set on the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of them that believe"; in Titus 2:10 he directs his son in the Gospel to exhort servants to be obedient to their masters "that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things"; and in chapter 3:4, 5 he stresses "the kindness of God our Saviour," manifested toward us in that, "not by works done in righteousness, which we did

ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us."

One more significant passage should be quoted, because it shows the true relation between God and his Christ in the work of redemption. In II Timothy 1:8-10, he exhorts his beloved son in the faith to "suffer hardship with the gospel according to the power of God; who saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal, but hath now been manifested by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel."

From the testimony of these passages it is evident that Paul viewed salvation as all of God and as always of God. It is he who wills that all men should be saved through a knowledge of the truth; it is he who saves them in his mercy when they accept the truth; it is he who calls them with a holy calling on the acceptance of it; it is he who graciously purposed before times eternal to raise up Jesus who, through the Gospel, deprived death of its power by bringing incorruptible life to light.

Though Paul states repeatedly that it is God who saves us, in the last passage he calls Christ Jesus our savior; but the context shows him to be so styled in a subordinate sense. While he generally speaks of the spirit of Christ as our savior in the representative sense, there Paul speaks of the historical Jesus as our savior in the instrumental sense, because he was the instrument of God in giving us the Gospel.

That is a distinction the Apostle always made for himself, as I Timothy 2:5 proves. In that verse he calls the man Christ Jesus a mediator between God and men, that is, a medium of communication in giving them the Gospel, just as in Galatians 3:19 he calls Moses a mediator between Jehovah and the Israelites, or a medium of communication in giving the latter his law. To Paul Jesus the man was a mediator, and Christ the spirit a savior.

There is thus quite a difference between the teaching of the Synoptists and the teaching of the Apostle with respect to the saviorship of Jesus. While they all regard the man Christ Jesus as an instrumental savior, like Moses or Joshua, the Apostles regard his spirit as a representative savior. In other words, to show the difference more completely, or make it appear more plain, in the Synoptic Gospels he is described as the offerer of salvation, but in the Epistles his spirit is described as the element of salvation, or the medium through which conscious salvation is obtained.

Having shown the sense in which Jesus is said to be a savior, let us examine the way in which he is said to save; for, as stated in other words before, it is still imperfectly conceived and improperly explained. The majority of Christian people continue to explain it with reference to some traditional theory, and not in harmony with the true interpretation of the Scriptures.

According to the Synoptic Gospels, the condition of salvation is twofold, namely, repentance and

faith. Jesus who, as Luke 19:10 says, came to seek and to save that which was lost, commenced his ministry by exhorting men to repent and believe the Gospel, that is, to think and act in harmony with what he taught, for to believe the Gospel is to receive its truths and practice its precepts. He offered them no dogma to accept and no creed to subscribe. In short, he presented no intellectual test either to obtain divine forgiveness or to enter his discipleship.

He found forgiveness for men where the Apostles and Prophets found it in the character of God, for in the prayer he gave the Disciples he states explicitly that God forgives us as freely as we forgive one another. He could say, and no doubt did say in substance, with I John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." He could also say, if he did not actually say, with Isaiah 55:7, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto Jehovah, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

All he required of men was to submit to the reign of God and become members of his kingdom through a changed habit of thought and a changed manner of life. In each Synoptic Gospel he is reported to have said, "If any man would come after me let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." And in John 8:31 he is represented as saying to those Jews who believed on him (literally,

to or toward him) by becoming his followers, "If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Jesus showed that sinners are saved through a right relation to their Maker, and that they get right with him as a wayward child gets right with its parents. In the parable of the Lost Son, where the father represents God and the son anyone that wanders away from him, he teaches that, when the wanderer returns, God is not simply ready to receive him, but is waiting to welcome him back. The narrative indicates that the heavenly Father accepts the very effort to find him, and anticipates it with his pardoning grace.

On passing from the Gospels to the Epistles and the book of Acts we meet a new type of teaching, not merely new forms of speech, but new modes of thought. The difference has been described as passing into a new thought-world; but that statement is much too strong, because the difference is not so great as it has seemed to some, and as it has been claimed to be by others.

Paul, the earliest interpreter of Jesus, developed certain doctrines that are not found in his teaching, such as the doctrine of reconciliation and the doctrine of justification. But the idea of being reconciled is implied in the parable of the Prodigal, which represents the father as going forth to meet the son whom, on meeting, he greets with a kiss of reconciliation; and the idea of being justified is implied

in the Sermon on the Mount, because to be justified is to be declared righteous, or to be regarded as righteous, and God regards as righteous all who seek first his kingdom and his righteousness. Thus both ideas are implicit in what Jesus taught, but they were not developed by him into formal doctrines.

Paul did more than that, though. He not merely developed the idea of being reconciled into a doctrine, but connected it with the death of Christ. That was something Jesus did not do, and did not dream would be done. There is a consecrative virtue in his death, of course, because it exerts a moral influence on many minds; but Paul did not call the death of Christ an atoning sacrifice, as so many theologians have. He viewed it rather as a sacrificial act, or an act of self-sacrifice, that had a sanctifying effect on men.

The doctrine of reconciliation is a very important one. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," as the Apostle says in II Corinthians 5:19. In the days of his flesh this was effected through the person and the work of Jesus, and since his ascension it has been effected through his Gospel and his spirit more than through his death, for death is nothing in itself, being only the culmination of the life. Apart from his life and teaching, the death of Jesus had no significance in regard to salvation, because, as Romans 5:10 teaches, "We are saved in his life," that is, in union or association with his life-giving spirit.

In his interpretation of Jesus Paul departed still further from his simple teaching by introducing his spirit between the sinner and God, thus making him an object of faith. In order to obtain salvation Jesus told men to repent and believe in the Gospel. According to his teaching, nothing more is needed to be saved than to receive his truth and abide in his word, that is, so to continue in his doctrine that it becomes the permanent condition of our life.

But, according to Acts 16:31, when the Philippian jailor inquired of Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" they answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved." Jesus never gave such an answer. According to chapter 20:21, in his address to the elders at Ephesus Paul said that, from the first day he came into Asia, he had taught publicly, and from house to house, "testifying both to Jews and to Greeks repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Jesus never said anything like that either.

He did not make himself an object of faith. On the contrary, God was to him, as he should be to us, the sole object of faith; and Jesus is our divine exemplar, or our supreme example of faith. He called God his Father, as he taught his Disciples to call him; he prayed to him from day to day, as he taught them to pray to him; and he sought to do his will, as he taught his followers to do it. John 8:29 represents Jesus as saying, "I do always the things that are pleasing to him." He is our exemplar, too, in that he exercised the same kind of faith, enjoyed

the same sort of fellowship, and shared the same quality of love.

His teaching is so different from that of the Apostle that the latter may seem to contradict him. But, though different, what Paul said is not really contrary to what Jesus said, because the difference is not so great as it appears. Paul was interpreting Jesus, and what he says is an interpretation, not a contradiction. Faith toward Christ means faith that leads men to follow Jesus, as previously explained; so that, while God is the direct object of faith, Christ is the indirect object. In other words, God is the object of saving faith, and Christ is the object of exemplifying faith, because Jesus was the very exemplification of true piety.

Elsewhere in the Epistles he is set forth as our supreme example. In I Corinthians 11:1 Paul says to his brethren, "Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ." In I Peter 2:21 the Apostle exhorts servants to obey their masters, and suffer patiently for well-doing, because Christ suffered on their behalf, leaving them "an example" that they "should follow his steps." In Hebrews 12:2 the author concludes his list of witnessing saints by urging us to run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the leader and perfecter of our faith, or, as the Twentieth Century New Testament translates, "the leader and perfect example of our faith." It is as our perfect pattern of holiness that the Apostles regard Jesus as an object of faith.

Here the question may arise in the minds of some, If Christ is the object of faith as our exemplar only, how can Paul say, as he says in I Thessalonians 5:9, that "God appointed us not unto wrath, but unto the obtaining of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ"? The Apostle gives the answer in Romans 5:10, where he states that we are "saved in his life," as already explained, that is, in virtue of his life coming into us. Peter had the right idea when in Acts 3:15 he called Jesus "the leader of life"; and Paul developed the idea with reference to his spirit by saying, as he does, in Galatians 2:20, "I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me; and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me."

Hence, according to the Apostle, we are saved through the indwelling of Christ, that is, through the life of Jesus coming into us and his spirit taking possession of us, because his spirit then becomes the life-element of our spirit. The faith which is in the Son of God is the faith of which Christ is the object, as before stated, his spirit being the essential element of all spiritual life. "If any man hath not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his," Romans 8:9 declares. In this passage Paul not only teaches that we are saved in virtue of his life coming into us through following him, but also implies that we cannot imitate his example as we should unless we make him the object of practical faith.

"Saved *in* his life." The preposition is significant,

because it proves the Apostle meant that we are saved through participating in his life, not by his life as something operating independently of us. Among the changes suggested by the New Testament revisers this is one of the most important. It would be interesting and instructive to show its significance in other relations, but its significance in relation to this subject is all that space permits to be shown at present.

Addressing a meeting of the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem concerning a good deed done to an impotent man, as reported in Acts 4:10-12, Peter said, "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that *in* the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even *in* him doth this man stand here before you whole. . . . And *in* none other is there salvation; for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, *wherein* we must be saved."

No fewer than four times here the preposition "in" is significant, because it suggests a vital relationship. It proves that Peter, like Paul, conceived of salvation as in Christ, not by him. As the impotent man was healed by the power of God through association with Jesus, so we are saved by the grace of God through spiritual union with him in Christ. We are saved in Christ, or in his name, as Peter says, because the name of Christ denotes his character or spirit. In no other character acquired by virtual or by actual faith is their salvation. We are

saved through our participation in his life and our possession of his spirit.

Salvation is either conscious or unconscious. In every nation he who fears God and works righteousness is acceptable to him, whether he knows it or not, Acts 10:35 teaches, because his character shows that he has virtual faith; but conscious salvation is obtained through actual faith, which impels us to imitate the example of Jesus by leading a life that is in purpose and spirit similar to his. "The free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus," Romans 6:23 declares; but we must be united to him by virtual or by actual faith, and we must show our faith by following him in order consciously to obtain it.

Personal salvation is not something magical or mechanical, but something practical and experimental. God saves those who unite themselves to him in Christ, and he cannot save them consciously or completely in any other way. As Bishop Westcott, one of the revisers, who recognized the true import of the preposition, stated shortly after the New Revision of 1884 appeared, "It makes a fundamental difference in the whole conception of Christianity whether we regard life as something that Christ has won for us apart from himself, or something which is absolutely bound up with himself, and only realized in vital fellowship with him."¹

Fellowship with Christ is the simple way of obtaining conscious salvation. Simple as it is, how-

¹The writer has kept the article, but has forgotten the name of the periodical.

ever, the doctrine has been misrepresented and its meaning obscured by unscriptural teaching in regard to it. For many centuries, through a misunderstanding of Hebrew sacrifices and a misinterpretation of Biblical terms, traditional teachers have proclaimed a heathen view of sacrifice and a mechanical theory of substitution which have given millions of sincere believers a wrong conception of our religion.

Long ages ago, in an attempt to explain the sacrificial phraseology of the New Testament, men taught that in the councils of eternity salvation was a transaction between the Father and the Son in which the Son offered himself to the Father for an atoning sacrifice; and for centuries millions of people have been told, in one form and another, that his suffering and death were an atoning sacrifice for the expiation of sin and the propitiation of God. Those who thus teach overlook the metaphorical character of the terms employed, and interpret them according to heathen, not Hebrew, usage; for in the Bible propitiatory offerings were only symbols of propitiation, showing that God is good, and ready to forgive.

Heathen writers thought that sin could be expiated and God propitiated by sacrifice; but Biblical writers, both Jewish and Christian, knew that God was gracious and needed nothing to propitiate his favor, and that sin was personal and could be expiated only by the one committing it. They knew, too, that he forgives sinners, when they repent and

turn to him, freely and of his own accord, not on account of anything given to him or done for him.

The idea that he forgives us for Christ's sake is also an unscriptural one. The last clause of Ephesians 4:32 in the Authorized Version is a mistranslation that was due to theological bias, and it has misled readers of the Epistle from the time that version was prepared. The revisers have given the correct rendering: "As God in Christ forgave you." The words are as apparent in Greek as they are in English, and the clause should always have been so translated. God forgives us for his own sake, but he forgives us in Christ, as the Apostle plainly stated and as has been clearly shown. The last clause of Colossians 3:13—"Even as the Lord (God) forgave you, so also do ye"—corresponds to this in thought.

Yet, in spite of those facts, people are still being told that Christ suffered as a sacrifice for sin, and died as a substitute for sinners; and in the Anglican and Wesleyan articles of religion it is expressly stated that he "was crucified, dead, and buried to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for the actual sins of men." Now there is nothing in the Scriptures to suggest such a statement. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning to men their trespasses, the author of II Corinthians 5:19 declares; and he besought his readers to be reconciled to him. But he did not intimate that God required anything more than union with him in Christ, or the spirit of Jesus, to effect a reconcilia-

tion. So, according to Scripture, as according to reason, it is man, not God, that needs to be reconciled.

Substitutional atonement is unbiblical, for none of the Biblical writers entertained such an idea; and it is as impossible as it is unbiblical, because nothing could render God forgiving, if forgiveness were not an attribute of his character. Besides, no one can be a moral substitute for another, because guilt cannot be transferred. One person may pay a financial debt for another, but no person can pay another's moral debt. A man may die in the place of his friend, but no number of deaths would make his friend right with God, if he is guilty of sin, for sin can be expiated only by the person that commits it.

This unscriptural theory is based partly on a misunderstanding of the Hebrew significance of sacrifice, and partly on an ambiguous translation of two Greek particles that are often employed as synonyms in the New Testament. The one occurs in I Corinthians 15:3—"Christ died for our sins"—and in Romans 5:6: "Christ died for the ungodly";² the other occurs in I Thessalonians 5:10—"Christ who died for us"—and in some manuscripts also in Galatians 1:4: "Who gave himself for our sins."³

Each of these particles is frequently rendered in our English versions by the preposition *for*, which is an ambiguous term. Though it generally signifies because of, by reason of, or on account of, when used

² ὑπέρ, meaning literally over or above.

³ περί, meaning about or concerning.

in reference to the suffering and death of Jesus it is commonly taken to mean in the room of, or in the stead of, and thus thought to express the idea of substitution. But that is an utter misconception. In matters moral and religious, where one person cannot assume the obligation of another, these Greek prepositions signify by reason of, on account of, in behalf of, or for the benefit of; and in all passages such as those quoted in the preceding paragraph one or other of these renderings should take the place of for.

Notwithstanding its unscripturalness, the death of Christ continues to be viewed in a pagan way as a fundamental doctrine. His death was the culminating expression of the spirit of his life, but it was fundamental because it vindicated the basic principle of consecration to death for the sake of truth and righteousness, not because it purchased our pardon by propitiating the divine favor or by appeasing the divine wrath. His steadfast devotion to the will of God shows what the devotion of all his disciples should be. He gave himself for us that we might give ourselves for others. As the author of I John 3:16 says, to translate literally, "Because he laid down his life on our behalf, we ought to lay down our lives on behalf of the brethren." A readiness to follow him at any cost affords the strongest proof that we are his true disciples and the clearest evidence that we possess his spirit.

So many passages in the Epistles speak of the blood of Christ in relation to our being saved that

the expression calls for a brief explanation before this chapter is concluded. Wherever it occurs it has only a figurative significance. Leviticus 17:11 tells us that "the life of the flesh is in the blood," meaning that this was the way the Hebrew writers viewed it. Hence the blood of Christ represents his life, so that when Paul said in I Corinthians 6:20 and 7:23 that we were "bought with a price," he meant that it cost Jesus his life to declare unto us the whole counsel of God. When it is said in I Peter 1:19 that we were redeemed with the "precious blood" of Christ, and in Ephesians 1:7 that we "have redemption" through his blood, and in Acts 20:28 that we were "purchased" with his blood, the meaning is not that he gave anything to God for us, but that he gave himself on our behalf, or for our sake, that we might be inspired with the same spirit.

While it is said in Ephesians 1:7 that we have "redemption through his blood," it is said in I Thessalonians 5:9 that we obtain "salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ," and in Romans 3:24 that we are justified through "the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." To have redemption through his blood, therefore, and to obtain salvation through Christ, are one and the same thing. The experience is gained through union with God in him. So, when it is said that we are redeemed by the blood of Christ, the reference is not to the literal blood, but to the life; and the life is not the physical life, but the spirit that characterized it. Since redemption

and salvation are equivalent terms in religion, to be saved in Christ, or to be redeemed with his blood, is to be brought into a right relation to God through the life of Christ coming into us and the spirit of Christ taking possession of us, to repeat for the sake of emphasis what has been stated before.

Much is said in the Epistles about the blood of Christ, as much is also said about his death. And we cannot make too much of the blood, so long as we recognize its figurative significance; for it represents the spotless life of a perfect self-offerer, and shows that our whole life should be one of self-dedication to God. And we cannot make too much of his death either, if we recognize that it had no effect on God, and has only a reconciling effect on men. His death was a voluntary self-offering in obedience to the divine will for the benefit of mankind; and in so dying he exemplified in a unique way the principle of vicarious suffering, which is an all-important principle, because the law of denying self for the sake of duty is fundamental to everything in Christian life.

Little more needs to be added, though a brief recapitulation may not be amiss. In the Synoptic Gospels Jesus is described as the bringer of salvation, or as the instrumental savior; in the Epistles his spirit is set forth as the medium of salvation, or as the representative savior. His death expresses the spirit that characterized his life, because he was always giving himself for others, and his blood

represents the spirit that characterized his death, because it was an act of voluntary compliance with the divine will. Everywhere in Scripture God is regarded as the sole Redeemer or the only Savior from sin. Every feature of the work of Jesus is important; but we should be very careful not to put him or his spirit in the place of God, for there is nothing saving in his work apart from our relation to God in him.

We should be very careful, also, not to think of the blood or the death of Jesus as having any efficacy whatever in itself. It is not the blood, but that which the blood represents, that brings us into a right relation with our Maker. God saves men from sin, as he reconciles them to himself, in Christ. It is the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus that makes us free from the law of sin and death, as Romans 8:2 teaches.

In her hymn for the young, Mrs. Shepherd explains why thousands of happy children are always singing glory to God in the other world, by saying:

Because the Savior shed his blood To wash away their sin,
Bathed in that pure and precious flood, Behold them
white and clean.

To sing these words intelligently we should interpret them as follows:

Because Christ Jesus showed them how To put away their
sin,
Their spirits are in heaven now, In him made pure and
clean.

Finally, we should be particularly careful not to think of anything Jesus did as having any effect on God, as many public speakers are still doing, and as many hymn-writers have always done. An example of the latter will illustrate the teaching of the whole class of speakers and writers. In one stanza of her well-known hymn, beginning, "There is a green hill far away," Mrs. Alexander says:

He died that we might be forgiven, He died to make us
good,
That we might go at last to heaven, Saved by his precious
blood.

Here the first line is false; the second and the third are only partly true, and the fourth has but a figurative significance. A Scriptural and unambiguous substitute would read:

He died that we might live like him, That we like him
might love,
That we might make this earth a heaven, Through power
from above.

Viewing his spirit as our priest or representative with God, the author of Hebrews 7:25 says that, because of the unchangeable priesthood of Jesus, "he is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." In this passage the last verb means rather to interpose than to intercede, because the mediation mentioned is not by means of words. To abridge the remark of Webster

and Wilkinson, there is no idea of supplication implied in the Greek verb, but simply the acting as a representative. Jesus is conceived as interposing for sinners by the prolonged energy of his work and the perpetual activity of his spirit. In each of these ways he draws men to God, and God in his infinite goodness saves them.

CHAPTER XI

THE LORDSHIP

Like his sonship and his saviorship, and to some extent his Christship, the lordship of Jesus has particular reference to his spirit. Indeed, while the first three features refer specially to the office of his spirit, the fourth refers exclusively to it, because in the days of his flesh he was not called lord in the religious sense of the term.

During his earthly ministry, the Disciples generally addressed him by a Greek term signifying master or teacher, and sometimes by the Hebrew term Rabbi, which signifies my master, and was a title of respect or honor among the Jews. In Mark 10:51 and John 20:16 we meet the Aramaic term Rabboni, which is equivalent to Rabbi or master, and is so explained by the author of the latter passage. In many passages, too, we find the Greek term for Lord used of him; and in John 13:13 the two terms Master and Lord are used together, which shows, as Dr. Plummer observes, that they were "the ordinary titles of respect paid to a Rabbi."

The Greek word for Lord corresponds to the Hebrew word which the Jews used for Jehovah, when they came to feel the name too sacred to utter, and

was the one the Alexandrian scholars employed to represent it in their translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. We have an example of the Old Testament use in Luke 2:26, where Simeon says it was revealed to him that he should not die "before he had seen the Lord's Christ," that is, the Christ of Jehovah; or, as Luke 9:21 reports Peter as saying, "the Christ of God."

When the term Lord is used of the historical Jesus, as it is sometimes in the Gospels, it is a mere human title expressing respect or honor; but, when it is used of his ascended spirit, as it is in the Acts and the Epistles, it is a religious title expressive of reverence and allegiance. In his Explanatory Notes John Wesley was critical enough to call attention to that fact. Commenting on the term as it is used in Acts 2:36, he remarks, "Jesus after his exaltation is constantly meant by this word in the New Testament, unless sometimes where it occurs in a text quoted from the Old Testament."

Acts 2:36 contains the first-known application of the title in this religious sense, and Peter was the first Apostle publicly to apply it in that sense. Addressing the men of Judaea on the day of Pentecost, he said, "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified." And, if the order of events recorded in that book be chronological, Paul was the second Apostle to apply it; for, according to chapter 9:5, when arrested by the spirit of Jesus

on the way to Damascus, he exclaimed, "Who art thou, Lord?"

Wherever we find the title applied to Jesus in the religious sense, therefore, we may know that the passage in which it is found was composed subsequently to his death. That is one way we can tell that the announcement of the angel to the shepherds in Luke 2:11—"There is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is an anointed Lord"—represents the thought of a later time, because Jesus was not called Savior nor Lord in the religious sense during his life on the earth.

It was the spirit of Jesus that God made both Lord and Christ, Peter told his countrymen in Acts 2:36, just as in chapter 5:31 he told the Council it was his spirit that God exalted at his right hand to be a leader and a Savior. Since it was God who anointed him, appointing his spirit to be Lord and exalting his spirit to be Savior, we may see that, as Christ is only our representative Savior, so he is only our representative Lord. Because God is the Supreme Being, he is always viewed by the Evangelists and Apostles as the Sovereign Lord and the sole ruler of the world.

For example, Acts 9:28 states that, after Paul was converted, and commissioned as a chosen vessel to preach Christ to both Jews and Gentiles, he spoke boldly "in the name of the Lord," meaning the Lord Jesus. Then in verse 31 it is stated that "the Church throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria had peace, being edified; and walking in the fear

of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, was multiplied." Lord in this verse is used in the Old Testament sense, and means the Lord Jehovah, or the Lord God. We find a similar instance in chapter 11, where we are told in verse 20 that some of Cyprus and Cyrene, when they were come to Antioch, spake to the Greeks, "preaching the Lord Jesus"; and in verse 21 that "the hand of the Lord (God) was with them, and a great number that believed turned unto the Lord (God)."

Another example is found in I Corinthians 8:6: "To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him." Here, in contrast to the heathen, who have gods many and lords many, Christians are said to have one Lord God, the Father or creator of all things, to whom they devote themselves; and one Lord Jesus, the mediator of the Father and his agent in the new creation, whose spirit they enthrone in their hearts.

Still another example may be given in this connection. In Romans 8:35 the Apostle asks, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" which means the love he has to us. But in verse 39 he expresses the conviction that nothing in creation, either appointed or permitted, "shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Here the love of God, the sovereign Lord, is described as the source of our security, as in John 3:16 and Ephesians 2:4 it is described as the source of our salvation. But, to quote the

remark of Webster and Wilkinson on Romans 8:39, "Its exercise towards us, its manifestation to us, its realization by us is in Jesus Christ," the representative Lord.

Most important is it to note this distinction, because in the *Te Deum* Christ is erroneously called "the king of glory"; but that is a title which belongs exclusively to God. It is nowhere applied to Christ in the Bible, nor should it ever have been applied to him. "The Lord of hosts (or, more literally, Jehovah Sabaoth), he is the king of glory," Psalm 24:10 declares. The lower title, "Lord of lords and King of kings," is applied to Christ in Revelation 17:14 and 19:16, but only on the principle of the spiritual unity of the Father and the Son.

In I Corinthians 2:8 and James 2:1 the phrase "Lord of glory" appears in our English versions; but the expression is a Hebraism, and the genitive has the force of an adjective. Hence it should be rendered "glorious Lord," or, since it refers to the risen Christ, "glorified Lord," as in the Twentieth Century New Testament. God is the author of all glory, or, as Ephesians 1:17 styles him, "The Father of glory," which, because the genitive has the qualifying power of an adjective, may be rendered "the all-glorious Father"; and Christ, as our ascended Lord, is the mediator of divine glory to all his faithful followers.

Discussing the historical basis of the Christian faith in his work on *Jesus and the Gospel*, Dr. Denney makes two statements which, though true

in part, need to be qualified and explained. "The primary testimony of the Disciples to Jesus was their testimony to his resurrection," he says; "except as risen and exalted, they never preach Jesus at all. It was his resurrection and exaltation which made him Lord and Christ, and gave him his place in their faith and life."¹

They did not preach Jesus and the resurrection till after his spirit rose, of course; but they preached the Gospel of the kingdom from the time he appointed his chosen Twelve to the apostleship, as Matthew 10:7 shows. "As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand," the passage reads. It was the resurrection and ascension that made him Lord and Christ, and the doctrine, rightly understood, is one of great importance; but the Gospel is a divine dynamic, and has a redemptive significance, independently of those two facts.

Then the statement that his resurrection and exaltation gave him his place in their faith and life is only partly true, because he had a place in their faith and life previously to his death. They not merely became his devoted followers, but regarded him as one raised up to seek and save lost men, and proclaimed his Gospel as the means of bringing them into the kingdom of God. They did not make him an object of faith during his lifetime, though, nor did they do so after his death, except in the sense of being a person to be imitated and a spirit to be

¹ P. 107.

possessed, as Paul teaches in I Corinthians 11:1 and Philippians 2:5.

Commenting on the declaration of Peter in Acts 4:12—"In none other is there salvation"—and on that of Paul in I Corinthians 3:11—"Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ"—Dr. Denney makes another statement that is only partly true. "The absolute religious significance of Jesus in all the relations of God and man," he says, "is the specific quality of the new faith as it appears in both."

But the Apostles did not proclaim a new faith. They preached the resurrection of Jesus, not as a matter of faith, but as a matter of fact. As a comforting fact is the way Paul uses it in I Thessalonians 4:14, where he says, "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Though Romans 10:9 states, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved," that statement does not mean that to believe he was raised has a saving significance.

A belief that he was raised is not necessary to salvation, because a man who has never heard of his resurrection may be saved; for, as the Apostle says in verse 13, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." That verse was taken from Joel 2:32, where it refers to the Lord Jehovah, and it seems to have that reference in this passage. But, inasmuch as Peter had quoted this prophecy

on the day of Pentecost, and given it an application to New Testament times, most exegetes suppose that Paul intended to apply the verse in Romans to Christ. That the word Lord there refers to him cannot be considered certain, however, as Dr. Dwight, editor of the American edition of Meyer on Romans, is candid enough to admit.

Some scholars have claimed that the language of the prophet is applied to Christ as the object of religious worship, but that is a serious error for the reason that he is not so regarded in any part of the New Testament. In Acts 7:59, Stephen, when dying, is described as "calling upon the Lord, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." But the term translated "calling upon" signifies, when used of Christ, to invoke or adore, not to worship as we worship God, for everywhere in Scripture God is set forth as the sole object of religious worship.

By the Apostles the spirit of Christ was conceived as the divinely exalted Lord, enthroned at the right hand of God; and the phrase, "All that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," in I Corinthians 1:2, was used to denote those who believed in him and acknowledged him as Lord. It designated them as his followers, not as his worshipers. It was not, as so many have thought, an assertion of his deity.

Discussing this phrase as it occurs in that passage, Professor Heinrici remarks that it has only a confessional significance.² Concerning the practice of invoking Christ, or calling on his name, he rightly

² Revised German edition of Meyer.

states that it was a relative, not an absolute, adoring of him as mediator and Lord, but under, or subordinate to, God.

Professor Heinrici's remark suggests the true interpretation of Romans 10:9-13. In verse 9 the Lord Jesus is mentioned as the object of confession—"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord"—and in verse 13 the Lord God is mentioned as the object of devotion and the author of salvation, because it was God who raised him from the dead. The manifest purpose of the Apostle in that part of the chapter was to show that, while all, both Jews and Gentiles, should acknowledge Christ as their exalted Lord, they must call upon the Lord Jehovah, or the Lord God, in order to be saved. That seems clearly to have been the meaning in the mind of the Apostle.

Whether that be true or not, however, Meyer's own note on the phrase is unquestionably true. "The calling on Christ," he says, "who nowhere in the New Testament appears as identical with the Jehovah of the Old Testament, is not the worshipping absolutely, as it takes place only in respect to the Father, as the one absolute God; but rather worshipping according to that relativity in the consciousness of the worshipper, which is conditioned by the relation of dependence and subordination of Christ to the Father, whose Son of like nature, image, partner of the throne, mediator and advocate on behalf of men, he is." The calling on his name

was an act of adoration, and not of worship, as we now use the term of God.

On resuming our study of Acts 2:36, after a seeming but not a real digression, let it be reaffirmed that Peter and Paul did not proclaim a new faith. On the contrary, they proclaimed the old faith of repentance toward God and devotion to his will, in order to obtain his forgiveness and enjoy his favor. While they spent much time proving that Jesus was the Christ of God, and showing that his spirit is the element in which we are saved, their chief task was directing men to observe all the things that he had commanded them.

When Peter told the chief priests that there is no other name under heaven in which we must look for salvation, he described the character or spirit in which we are consciously saved; and when Paul told the Corinthians that "other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ," he described the solid groundwork on which men are taught in both the Gospels and the Epistles to build their doctrines and their morals. In that sense we sing, and may always sing, "The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord"; for the spirit of Jesus is the unchangeable Lord of his followers, as his teaching is the immutable law of their lives.

Jesus in his whole personal manifestation is the fundamental basis of Christianity throughout the New Testament. In his name, or in accordance with his personal manifestation, the Apostles sought to get men to become his followers, just as he sought

to make them his disciples by getting them to deny themselves and take up their cross and follow him. In the Gospels association with his person is frequently, if not generally, implied; but in the Epistles association with his spirit is always meant.

Christship and Lordship are two closely connected ideas in the Christian Scriptures, and their union by Peter in the passage under consideration was suggested by Psalm 110:1. The Old Testament revisers have rightly dropped the capital which begins the second word for lord in the Authorized Version. Printed as it appears in the Revised Version, the verse reads, "The Lord (Jehovah) saith unto my lord (the king), Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." There Jehovah promises complete subjection of his enemies to a theocratic king who, as such, was viewed as a Messiah or Christ, and who, as a person of rank, was addressed by the title lord.

From the speeches of Peter it is plain that he conceived the lordship of Christ as a spiritual dominion, and from I Corinthians 15:25, where the same verse is applied to him, it is equally plain that both Peter and Paul conceived of his reign as dating from his ascension. In like manner, all the Apostles conceived of his reign. But the thing to be specially noticed here is that it is God who gives him this dominion, just as it was God that gave dominion to the theocratic king. Hence we should always distinguish between the Lord God and the Lord Jesus or the Lord Christ, his anointed representative.

How is this dominion given? it may be asked. Not arbitrarily or capriciously, of course, but by moral and spiritual means, as God does everything else in the realm of religion. Through the agency of the Gospel and the operation of his Spirit he impels men to become followers of Christ. That is what Paul taught when he affirmed in I Corinthians 12:3, "No man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the holy Spirit." To say that Jesus is Lord in the sense the Apostle teaches is believingly to confess him as the spiritual Christ of God.

Charles Wesley's familiar lines afford a happy explanation, expressed in rhythmical language, of the Apostle's thought:

No man can truly say That Jesus is the Lord,
Unless thou take the veil away, and breathe the
living word.

Possibly no other terms would better explain the meaning of the phrase, "In the holy Spirit," as employed in the foregoing passage. By his Spirit God removes the veil of ignorance and prejudice, or of indifference and doubt, from unregenerate minds, by inspiring them with the living word and quickening them into newness of life.

Having answered the question, How is the dominion given? we may now answer the other, How is the lordship exercised? All true religion is produced by the operation of the divine Spirit on the human soul. That is the prompting power by which men are led to confess Christ, or to call him Lord.

When they acknowledge him as Lord by receiving his truth and practicing his precepts, his spirit takes possession of their hearts; for his is a spiritual lordship and theirs is a voluntary allegiance. The Galilean king is Lord of none but voluntary subjects.

It is not calling him Lord that makes us his subjects, but having his spirit and doing the will of God with his spirit; for, as Romans 8:9 says, "If any man hath not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Christ becomes our Lord when we submit ourselves to God, and count it our delight, as Jesus did, to do his will; in other words, when we personally enthrone him in our hearts and make him the guide of our life. He rules his followers, therefore, not by lording it over them, but by dwelling within them and reigning in their lives.

As reported in Acts 10:36, when preaching Christ to Cornelius, Peter declared, "He is Lord of all"; but the declaration means that in the divine purpose he is destined to be Lord of all, not that he was then Lord of all. His universal, like his personal, lordship is not owing to arbitrary appointment. He was not then, and is not yet, Lord of all, but will be Lord of all when all have yielded to his sway. Nor is his universal lordship due to anything he has done for men apart from their relation to him. Only when he dwells in all hearts and reigns in all lives will he be Lord of all.

Some pages back it was stated that we should always distinguish between the Lord God and the Lord Christ, his anointed representative. The dis-

tion must in every case be determined by the context which, as a rule, enables us quite easily to tell. A few examples in addition to those already mentioned may be given. In the first chapter of Acts, at verse 21, Peter reverts to the time when the Lord Jesus went in and out among his Disciples; and in verse 24, describing the selection of a successor to Judas, he says, "They prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew of these two the one whom thou hast chosen, to take the place in this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas fell away." The Lord God is there meant, because he only knows the hearts of all men, and he alone can answer prayer.

In the second chapter of Acts Peter applies to Christian times a pretty long quotation from the prophecy of Joel. That is to say, he applies it in the sense of looking for its fulfilment in Christian times. Verse 20 speaks of portents, or momentous things the prophet expected to happen, before the great and notable day of the Lord should come; and verse 21 declares that "whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." In the prophecy the word Lord refers to Jehovah, as every student of the Bible knows; but some exegetes think the Apostle applied it in each verse to Christ.

That, however, does not seem probable, as the application of the prophecy is not to Christ himself, but to the last days of the Christian age. Because the day of Jehovah and the day of Christ's coming to end the world were viewed by Peter as contempo-

aneous, he may have had Christ as well as Jehovah in his mind when uttering verse 20; but, for the reasons given in our discussion of Romans 10:13, that God is always the author of salvation, and that Jehovah and Christ are never identified in acts of worship, the present writer believes that Peter had Jehovah only in his mind when uttering verse 21.

Again, in the fourth chapter, verse 29 says that Peter and John with their companions prayed to the Lord, and said, "Grant unto thy servants to speak thy word with all boldness"; and verse 33 says that "with great power gave the Apostles their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." We know the word Lord in the former verse refers to God, first, because he is so addressed in verse 24; secondly, because he is described as the Maker of heaven and earth; and, thirdly, because he is the sole object of worship throughout the Scriptures.

Then, in the eighth chapter, verse 25 tells us that Peter and John, "when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans"; but verse 26 tells us that "an angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem into Gaza." We know that Christ is meant in the former verse, because "the word of the Lord" is frequently employed in that sense throughout this book, as a reference to chapters 13: 49, 15: 35, and 19: 10 will show; and we know that God is meant in the latter verse, partly because

the phrase, "An angel of the Lord," is used only of him in the Scriptures, and partly because the form, "An angel of God," is used in chapters 10:3 and 27:23 to express a similar idea.

The foregoing examples will suffice to indicate how the context enables us to determine whether God or Christ was in the mind of an Apostle when speaking or writing the word Lord. It is very important to make this distinction, because the lordship, like the saviorship, of Christ was given him of God, who gave him also "to be head over all things to the Church," as Ephesians 1:22 says. It was God who appointed his spirit to be the supreme head of the Church, as it was he who appointed his spirit to be the representative Lord of all. All the love that is in him, like all the grace that comes through him, proceeds from God as the origin or source of everything good.

Thus from this inductive study Jesus of Nazareth emerges as the ideal man of history, whose sublime personality places him at the head of humanity, and whose exalted spirit the Apostles placed at the head of the Church. As a man he stands where he has always stood—as a religious teacher to be trusted and a religious leader to be followed; as a spirit he remains where he will ever remain—as a religious Lord to be obeyed.

Remembering that it is the spirit of Jesus that God appointed to be Lord in the representative and mediatorial sense, let us see what it means when it is said in I Corinthians 15:25 that "he (Christ)

must reign till he (God) hath put all his enemies under his feet"; and in Philippians 2:10, 11 that "in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

We are concerned at present only with things on the earth, not with things in heaven nor with things under the earth. But if his reign is spiritual, and subjection to his rule is voluntary, how can it be affirmed that he must reign? Why must he reign? The verb used by the Apostle signifies it is fitting or proper. Hence he had in mind a moral or practical necessity in the interest of religion and for the benefit of mankind.

He must reign, first, because the individual cannot realize himself fully without the spirit of Jesus. Men become like those with whom they associate, or that with which they commune. Their communion with his spirit makes them like him. When a man looks into a mirror, he sees his natural features reflected in it; but when he looks into the Gospel, and sees Christ in it, he sees a changed man reflected therefrom; that is to say, he sees himself being gradually transformed into the likeness of Jesus. To quote the improved rendering of II Corinthians 3:18, "We all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit."

The glory mentioned here denotes effulgence, radiance, and grace, and is the spiritual form into whose likeness we are to be changed; but, as someone has suggested, it symbolizes character. The glory of Christ in human life is character. Looking at him, or communing with him, we are imperceptibly changed from character to character, or from one degree of grace to another, till we come to resemble him. The change is thus a progressive as well as a gradual one. Only the spirit of Jesus can produce such a transformation, and only by being so transformed can man fulfil himself.

He must reign, secondly, because society must be reconstructed, and its reconstruction cannot be effected without his spirit. All political students admit that much is wrong with our civilization; and, when we consider how it has been achieved, we cannot wonder that such should be the case. The progress of mankind from savagery to citizenship was very slow and took a very long time. In the childhood of the race prehistoric men, limited in knowledge and intelligence, groped their way by slow degrees, little by little and step by step, until they gained enough experience to enable them to lay the foundations of social life.

As a consequence, the first attempts at law-making were crude and the earliest forms of legislation were cruel. Notwithstanding nineteen centuries of Christianity, many imperfect laws remain upon our statute books and many pagan practices are still permitted by our rulers. If every community were

reconstructed on the basis of the Golden Rule, all social wrongs might be righted and all social grievances redressed, for all social evils are remediable. But the Golden Rule will not operate of itself. It must be applied to existing conditions, and we must apply it with the spirit of Jesus to make conditions what they ought to be. Only by his spirit can society be so reconstructed as to be worthy of the name Christian.

He must reign, thirdly, because the world must be reorganized on the basis of the Sermon on the Mount in order to retain and perfect our civilization. Owing to selfishness and greed, all governments are more or less envious and jealous of one another; and envy and jealousy will continue among them till nations as well as individuals come to cherish feelings of fairness and friendliness. While wars and fightings abound, peoples can neither progress nor prosper steadily any more than individuals can, because they proceed from desires that militate against both progress and prosperity.

The New Testament sets before men life and death, moral life and moral death; and nations and individuals alike must practice the precepts of the Gospel to some extent, at least, otherwise they will destroy themselves through lust of power and pleasure. The aim of Jesus was to make love real and righteousness regnant in all human relationships, and his is the only spirit that can enable us to do that. As truth is powerful and will prevail, so righteousness is all-powerful and must be prac-

ticed. The spirit of Jesus must reign, if humanity is to cultivate the qualities that are worth preserving and achieve a civilization that is worth perpetuating.

He must reign, fourthly, because it is the will of God that he shall reign. This is a moral order, and morality is part of the order. As Madame de Staël somewhere observes, "Morality is not in the nature of things; it is the nature of things." All moral knowledge has its source and all moral conduct finds its sanction in the self-manifesting character of God. The moral laws we now recognize as established, and regard as indispensable to civilized society, were not made by us, nor invented by our ancestors. They are in the constitution of the universe and were simply discovered from age to age.

His will was gradually apprehended and his laws were progressively discovered. The moral legislation of the Bible was slowly developed through an increasing knowledge of God and a growing understanding of his purpose concerning mankind. The Ten Commandments prohibit the violation of laws, embedded in the present order, that are essential to the well-being of all peoples and at all times; but the commandments of Jesus respecting murder, adultery, divorce, perjury, and retaliation embody principles, also inherent in this order, that are still more necessary to the physical strength and moral health of the human race.

Paul told the Corinthians that Christ must reign till God has put all enemies under his feet, and as-

sured the Philippians that in the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that he is Lord to the glory of God the Father. That is a large hope, but it is not too large to be measurably fulfilled. This is God's world, and the divine purpose, which runs increasingly through the ages, must in time find virtual accomplishment, because society must be governed in good degree by the spirit of Jesus or become desperately corrupt and incurably diseased, and eventually perish from the earth.

When the Apostle says that the lordship of Christ must be acknowledged to the glory of God, he employs a form of speech that Jesus himself employed. As all good comes from God, so all goodness realized in us redounds to his glory. Because he is unchangeable and infinite his essential glory is always the same; we can neither add to nor take from it. But we can increase his declarative glory by making his name more widely known and by getting his will more generally done throughout the world. And that is what God desires of us, though he wishes it on our account, or for our sake.

It should be stated in conclusion that he is glorified by us only as he glorifies himself in us or through us, so that we cannot glorify him at all, unless we let him make us better or help us to make others better, or both, through a fuller conformity to his image under the leadership and lordship of his Christ. Therefore, for the sake of ourselves, for the

sake of society, and for the sake of the world, we should pray as well as sing:

Let every kindred, every tribe,
On this terrestrial ball,
To him all majesty ascribe,
And crown him Lord of all.

CHAPTER XII

THE SUPREMACY

For the man Christ Jesus the supremacy claimed in Scripture is his sublime personality and his profound spirituality. In the Synoptic Gospels it is the superhuman excellence of his character and the supernatural nature of his teaching; in the Fourth Gospel it is a fulness of the Spirit which made him the unique manifestation of the Father; in the thought of Paul it was a divine endowment which constituted him the preëminent mediator between God and men.

But throughout most of the New Testament writings the supremacy claimed is generally ascribed to his spirit. It is his spirit that was exalted to be a leader and a Savior; it is his spirit that was appointed to be both Lord and Christ; it is his spirit that was assigned to a seat at the right hand of God; it is his spirit that was given a place in the Pauline benediction and in the baptismal formula; and it is his spirit that is said in Colossians 2: 9 to embody the fulness of divinity, for when the Apostle declares that in him dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily, he refers to his glorified state in the other world.

As described in chapter 1:15-20 of that Epistle his preëminence consists in being the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation, the first-born from the dead, and the head of the Church. It was the will of the Father that he should stand first, or take precedence over every other being, in dignity, honor, and rank, as well as in spiritual activity, by the reconciling of all things to himself through his life and work.

Of all the features of his supremacy his place in the Pauline benediction and in the baptismal formula is, perhaps, the most significant to ordinary students of the Bible; but the two passages which record that distinction have, for many centuries, been so strangely misconceived that their true significance has been largely overlooked. Let us, therefore, seek at this point to ascertain what their real meaning is.

Commencing with II Corinthians 13:14, because it is much the earlier passage, we must interpret it in the light, and by the aid, of the context. After exhorting his readers to unity and peace, through the God of love and peace, the Apostle concludes this Epistle by praying, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all." This is a comprehensive prayer, containing three petitions for things to be experienced by the Corinthian Christians.

Paul prays, first, that they may experience the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, that is, the grace

which belongs to him, and which comes from God through him; he prays, secondly, that they may experience the love of God, that is, the love of benevolence which he has for mankind, and which he showed to the world when he raised up Jesus to proclaim his truth; he prays, thirdly, that they may experience the communion of the holy Spirit, that is, the participation in the divine nature which the Spirit of God produces, and the fellowship with one another which it brings about.

No verse in the New Testament is easier to interpret. Its teaching is simple and practical, and may be personally verified in experience by every follower of Jesus. But, in spite of its plain meaning, ideas have been read into it, or read out of it, that had no place in the Apostle's thought. Some exegesets have said that each blessing was asked of its appropriate giver, but that assertion is utterly incorrect. The whole prayer is addressed to God, from whom all good gifts come, and who is mentioned in verse 11 as the author of unity and peace and love. Prayer is never addressed either to Christ or to the holy Spirit by any of the Apostles.

Speaking of diversities of gifts in First Corinthians 12:11, Paul says, "All these worketh the one and the same Spirit," meaning that the endowments mentioned all result from the working of the Spirit of God. In like manner, he means in this prayer that the fellowship produced results from the working of his Spirit. As Professor Heinrici remarks, he means the fellowship of which the holy Spirit is the

operating force. Paul wished that grace, love, and fellowship might be experienced by every member of the Corinthian Church.

Taking up the baptismal formula, we shall find it just as easy to interpret. In the New Revision it is rendered, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit." That this was a late ecclesiastical form, unknown to the Apostles, is proved by such passages as Romans 6:3 and Acts 8:16, which state that they baptized into Christ, or into the name of Christ, not into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit.

Now what is the import of this formula? The command was to baptize not in the name, but into the name, of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit, regarded as a unity. Since the name of God in Scripture is his character as revealed or manifested, to baptize into his name means to baptize into his character; and to baptize into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit is to baptize into the threefold character which that formula implies. This is described by Paul as the love of God, the grace of Christ, and the fellowship of the holy Spirit, or the fellowship which that Spirit begets in us both with God and with one another.

So this passage is no harder to understand than the other is, and the formula was probably fashioned from the benediction, as it was composed subsequently to that prayer. It appears to have been

constructed after the Church gave Christ a unique relation to the Father and to the holy Spirit. The meaning of the formula suggests the Scriptural import of Christian baptism. It was designed with a view to the development of a threefold character, whose attributes are benevolent love, Christlike grace, and spiritual life.

Neither of these passages has any dogmatic significance. That is to say, neither of them teaches the doctrine of the Trinity, though both of them, doubtless, served as germs from which the doctrine was developed. Neither Paul nor Matthew was thinking of the constitution of the divine nature, but rather of the exaltation of human nature. Each one was preaching, not speculating, each having something practical and experimental in view. The doctrine of the Trinity is nowhere dogmatically stated in the New Testament.

Dr. Denney has a note on II Corinthians 13:14 that is worth reproducing and pondering in this connection. "It would be too much to say," he observes, "that the doctrine of the Trinity, as it is defined in the Creeds, is explicitly to be found here. There is no statement at all in this place of the relations of Christ, God, and the holy Spirit. Still it is on passages like this that the Trinitarian doctrine of God is based, or rather it is in passages like this that we see it beginning to take place."¹ The last sentence should be qualified, because there was no thought of such a doctrine in the Apostle's mind.

¹ The Expositor's Bible.

The tendency toward formal creed-making did not begin till a couple of centuries later, and the doctrine of the Trinity was not formulated for nearly three centuries afterwards.

There are three things in this benediction to be differentiated, namely, Christ, God, and the holy Spirit, or as expressed in the baptismal formula the Father, the Son, and the holy Spirit. We must discriminate their specific differences by the testimony of the Scriptures, and not by the terminology of the Creeds.

It is not necessary to say much about God or Christ, because Christian scholars are in practical agreement with respect to them. All believe that God is a Spirit, infinite and eternal, and without form or parts; and all will admit that, in this connection, Christ is the spirit of Jesus regarded as the leader and Lord of those who unite themselves to God in him. It is the holy Spirit that needs to be discussed at length, because concerning that expression there is much confusion and misconception.

Perhaps this is the best place to tell the reader that the word for spirit in Greek is *pneuma*, and that, like the English word, it is a neuter noun. There is no sex in the Deity, nor is there sex in the Spirit. Therefore, we should always think and speak of them as sexless. The translators of the Authorized Version recognized that fact when they gave us the rendering of Romans 8:16: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." The revisers changed the neuter pronoun

to the masculine, but for creedal reasons or on dogmatic grounds. They had no authority, however, nor had they any right, to make the change; and it is misleading, as well as incorrect.

Pneuma or Spirit occurs very frequently in the New Testament, but sometimes with the article and sometimes without it. The expression holy Spirit, also, occurs sometimes with and sometimes without the article. But nothing depends on its insertion or omission, because, as employed by the Evangelists and Apostles, its presence or absence makes no essential difference in the signification of these terms. In this connection it should be observed that in some places both of our English versions translate the latter term holy Ghost and in other places holy Spirit; but it should always be translated holy Spirit, the modern English form, which the revisers have often printed in the margin.

Professor Skinner says that in the Old Testament "the Spirit of God is ordinarily mentioned as the life-giving principle emanating from Jehovah, which pervades and sustains the world, and endows select men with extraordinary powers and virtues."² That statement, however, is quite inadequate, because God is potency or energy; and that which emanates from him is not principle, but power or force. His Spirit, therefore, is that in him which pervades the universe, forming his worlds, fashioning his works, sustaining his creatures, and endowing them with

²The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, comment on Isaiah 40:13.

attributes and qualities appropriate to their nature.

The Spirit of God is divine power or force; or, because Jehovah is conceived in Scripture as the living God, his Spirit is best described, perhaps, as living or life-giving energy. This energy is represented as operating in both the spiritual and the physical domain. It is that in God which vitalizes or energizes in every realm, effecting physical as well as moral regeneration. Some scholars define it as his agent in all the divine processes. But it is rather an agency than an agent, because agent implies that it is something apart from God, whereas it is God himself acting according to his divine method of operation. As Philippians 2:13 teaches, it is God who worketh in us both to will and to work. "All life is due to God exercising his energy," as Davidson says; "it continues while he continues to exert the energy; it ceases when he no more exerts it."³

In Genesis 1:2 the Spirit is described as creative energy brooding upon the face of the waters, like a bird hovering over its young, and fitting them to generate and maintain life; in Isaiah 32:15-19 it is described as renovating energy poured out from on high, renewing external nature, causing righteousness to dwell in the land, and making the will of God to prevail in society; in Isaiah 44:3, 4 it is described as divine energy poured out upon Israel, bringing blessings to his descendants and causing them to spring up as grass among the waters;⁴ in

³ *The Expositor*, Vol. XIII, p. 253.

⁴ So the Septuagint translates here.

Ezekiel 37:14 it is similarly described as energy from Jehovah that renews and maintains human life. These examples are sufficient for our purpose, as they show that the Spirit of God is conceived by the Old Testament writers as an agency in the process of both physical and moral regeneration.

By all of them God is regarded as energy, not as essence; and his Spirit is regarded as effluence, or that which emanates from him. In other words, to speak with Oehler, "This Spirit is represented as a power proceeding from Jehovah, a something communicated by him."⁵ In the ancient Scriptures God is not said to be a Spirit, but to have a spirit. To speak with Oehler again, "The express declaration that God is Spirit does not occur in the Old Testament, which is rather accustomed to say that God has the spirit, and causes it to go out from him."⁶ The idea of God having a spirit seems to have originated at a time when Jehovah was regarded as a local Tribal Deity, who operated from some distant center by sending forth power that produces positive effects.

The spirituality of God and his presence throughout the universe, however, are everywhere assumed; and they are explicitly declared in Psalm 139:7-10: "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of

⁵ Old Testament Theology, p. 141, American Edition.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." That passage proves that Jehovah was conceived by the psalmist as a spiritual, no less than an omnipresent, Being. It is because God is infinite Spirit or infinite energy that he can be in every place at the same time.

Three times in the Old Testament this power of God is described as holy Spirit—once in the Psalms and twice in the book of Isaiah. In Psalm 51:11 the poet, praying for pardon and cleansing, says, "Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy Spirit from me." Speaking of the Israelites, the author of Isaiah 63:10 charges them with having rebelled against Jehovah and with having "grieved his holy Spirit;" and in verse 11, referring to the days of Moses and his people, asks his hearers, "Where is he that put his holy Spirit in the midst of them?"

In these verses holy Spirit is supposed by some scholars to be different from the word spirit used without the adjective, but that is an erroneous supposition. The form is simply a later way of speaking, after the holiness of God was in some measure realized in experience. It represents a more developed stage of the religious consciousness, and a fuller appreciation of the need of inward holiness. Jehovah is often called "the Holy one of Israel" by the prophet of the Exile, and the idea is that the Spirit is holy in the same sense in which he is holy. That the prophet made use of Spirit and holy Spirit

as equivalent terms is proved by verse 14, where he says that the Spirit of Jehovah caused the people of Israel to rest after their journey through the wilderness. In the former verse the Spirit is represented as dwelling in the midst of the people; in the latter it is represented as bringing them to a place of rest. God has only one Spirit, and he himself is that Spirit.

Some scholars, too, believe they see a tendency in the prophetic passage to hypostatize the divine Spirit, but that also is a mistaken opinion. Nowhere in the Old Testament is the Spirit of God regarded as a person. It is always viewed, or everywhere conceived, as power proceeding from him and communicated by him. There is no exception anywhere. What may seem to be one is only a bold personification. We have an example of this in the passage just explained where the Israelites are said to have grieved the holy Spirit. The use of the verb grieve here marks the highest degree of personification of the Spirit to be found in the Old Testament.

Coming to the New Testament and commencing with Paul, we find him speaking of the Spirit impersonally as the prophet of the Exile speaks of it. In I Thessalonians 5:19 he says, "Quench not the Spirit"; and in Ephesians 4:30 he says, "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption." In each of these passages the Spirit is viewed as something in God that can be quenched and grieved, that is, repressed and re-

sisted, just as it is viewed in the prophecy; and the verb grieve in Ephesians is translated in Delitzsch's Hebrew New Testament by the very word that appears in Isaiah 63:10.

Paul describes the Spirit not only as something that can be grieved and quenched, but also as something that can be given and received. In I Thessalonians 4:8 the Apostle says, "He that rejecteth, rejecteth not man, but God, who giveth his holy Spirit unto you"; and in Romans 5:5 he says, "The love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the holy Spirit which was given unto us." In each of these verses the Spirit is the energy in God which he bestows upon his people, and by which he communicates his grace and love to them.

Similarly in I Thessalonians 1:5 it is mentioned as the power which accompanies the truth, and which energizes those that receive it. "Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the holy Spirit, and in much assurance," Paul says; and in the following verse he speaks of those who "received the word in much affliction, with joy of the holy Spirit." In the former verse, with which I Peter 1:12 should be compared, it is that which gives power and assurance; in the latter, with which Romans 15:13 should be compared, it is that which imparts joy, that is, spiritual joy, or the joy God gives in compensation of tribulation.

In I Corinthians 2:10-13 the Spirit is mentioned as the medium of revelation. Speaking of the things that God prepared for them that love him, the

Apostle says, "Unto us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man which is in him? even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God. But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us by God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth." Here the Spirit is not only mentioned as the medium of revelation, but is also represented as an agency of communication and instruction, continuous in its operation, as in the Old Testament. And in verse 11 it is described as the organ of intelligence in a way similar to that in which it is described in Isaiah 40:13: "Who hath directed the Spirit of Jehovah, or being his counsellor hath taught him?"

Furthermore, the Spirit is described by Paul as dwelling in men. In I Corinthians 3:16, to impress his readers with the fact, he puts a pointed question to them, "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" And in II Timothy 1:14, reminding his son in the faith of the trust committed to him, he charges him to guard it "through the holy Spirit which dwelleth in us." In each of these verses the figure of a dwelling is used of the community, and the Church collectively is viewed as the temple of God and the dwelling-place of the Spirit; but in I Corinthians

6:19 the person of each believer is viewed as a shrine of the Spirit. There the Apostle asks again, "Know ye not that your body is a temple of the holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God?" The same ideas are found in John 14:17, where the Spirit of truth is said to dwell in believers individually, and among them collectively as a religious community.

Then, in concluding our study of what Paul says on this subject, it should be stated that in Ephesians 6:18 he enjoins upon Christians the duty of "praying at all seasons in the Spirit"; in Titus 3:5 he speaks of the "renewing of the holy Spirit"; in Romans 8:14 he speaks of being "led by the Spirit"; in verse 16, of the Spirit bearing "witness with our Spirit"; in verse 26, of the Spirit helping "our infirmity"; in chapter 15:16, of the Gentiles being "sanctified by the holy Spirit"; and in verse 19, of the things which Christ wrought through him "in the power of the holy Spirit." The last statement is typical of Paul's mention of the Spirit. That Apostle always describes it as a power or an agency and never refers to it as a person.

Prior to our examination of the Gospels and the book of Acts a few references to the Spirit in the other Epistles may be noted to make the induction more complete. In I Peter 4:14, addressing those who are reproached because they belong to Christ, the Apostle says, "Blessed are ye, because the Spirit of glory and the Spirit of God resteth upon you"; in II Peter 1:21 he says, "No prophecy ever came by

the will of man; but men spake from God, being moved by the holy Spirit"; in Hebrews 3:7 the writer represents the holy Spirit as saying, "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation"; in chapter 6:4 he speaks of those who were once enlightened, "and were made partakers of the holy Spirit"; in Jude 20 that Apostle enjoins his brethren, whom he describes as "praying in the holy Spirit," to keep themselves in the love of God. In these as in the Pauline passages the Spirit is mentioned impersonally.

Matthew mentions the Spirit a number of times, and every time impersonally, as the Apostles do. In chapter 1:18 he speaks of Mary being "with child of the holy Spirit," and in verse 20 of Jesus as being "conceived" of the holy Spirit; in chapter 3:11 he reports John as saying of Jesus, "He shall baptize you with the holy Spirit"; and in verse 16 he describes "the Spirit of God" as descending as a dove, and coming upon him. In chapter 4:1 he says, "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness"; in chapter 12:28 he represents Jesus as saying, "If I in the Spirit of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you"; in chapter 10:20 he describes Jesus as assuring the twelve Apostles of the aid of "the Spirit" of the Father in time of danger or difficulty; in chapter 22:43 he describes David as having spoken "in the Spirit" concerning a Messianic king; and in chapter 28:19 the words holy Spirit are inserted in the baptismal formula, which has already been explained.

Mark has no reference that does not occur in Matthew, but Luke has several additional references. In chapter 1:15, 41, 67 he speaks of certain persons as being "filled with the holy Spirit," as Paul does of certain other persons in Ephesians 5:18; and in chapter 4:1 of Jesus being "full of the holy Spirit." In chapter 2:25 he says the Spirit was upon Simeon, just as he reports Jesus as saying of himself in chapter 4:18, and as he represents an angel as saying it should rest upon Mary in chapter 1:35, "The holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee."

Concerning the last passage, which corresponds to Matthew 1:18, it should be stated that the expression, "the power of the Most High," denoting the creative energy of God, is used impersonally as it is everywhere else in the Bible. The comment of Dr. Bernhard Weiss on that passage is worth translating and transferring to this page. He says significantly, "Holy spirit is not put without the article according to the nature of a proper noun, because the holy Spirit is not personal; but is regarded as creative energy coming from God, and therefore holy." It is here characterized according to its essential quality, he adds, the meaning being that it was holy Spirit which should descend upon her.

These references in the Gospels are similar to those found in the Epistles, and the last one proves that the Evangelists, like the Apostles, regarded the Spirit as a quickening power proceeding from God. All scholars admit that it is used impersonally in

the Old Testament, many admit that it is used of a power of God in some parts of the New Testament, but most have failed to see that it is always so used. A little reflection should convince us that there is not, and that there could not be, an exception.

Illustrations having been given of the chief references in the Gospels and Epistles, it is scarcely necessary to mention many of those that occur in the book of Acts. The most frequent reference in that book is to certain persons being "filled with the holy Spirit," as in chapters 2:4, 4:8, 4:31, 9:17, 13:9; and the next most frequent reference is to certain other persons being "full of the Spirit," as in 6:3, 6:5, 7:55, 11:24, the first form occurring no fewer than five times and the second no fewer than four. Then the Spirit of God is described as being "poured out" upon all flesh in chapter 2:17, and as being "poured out" on the Gentiles in chapter 10:45; it is also described in chapters 10:44 and 11:15, as having fallen on believers and in chapter 19:6 as coming upon them. These expressions also show that it is viewed impersonally in this book, just as it is elsewhere viewed in the other books. It is particularly interesting to observe, however, that in chapter 10:38 Luke reports Peter as saying that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with "the holy Spirit and with power," because the expression proves that to be anointed with the Spirit is to be endued with power from God.

One peculiar passage in this book must be considered by itself. Chapter 19:2 states that, on com-

ing to Ephesus, Paul asked certain disciples there if they received the holy Spirit when they believed; and they replied, "We did not so much as hear whether there is a holy Spirit." If any of them were Jews, they could hardly have meant that they had not heard of the existence of the Spirit, though those who had been Gentiles might have meant that. Hence the reply must mean that they had not heard of the presence and activity of the Spirit, or that its operation could be realized in experience.

The revisers supply the word given, but that is doubtfully correct, and they print the literal rendering in the margin. The meaning seems clearly to be that they had not heard of the conscious manifestation of the Spirit in the Church and in the individual heart; for verse 6 tells us that, after its nature was explained to them, the Spirit came upon them, and they experienced individually its quickening effect.

Several peculiar passages occur in the Fourth Gospel. John 7:39—"The Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified,"—resembles this passage, and should be similarly treated. The word given is not in the best manuscripts, and is of doubtful authority, as Dr. Plummer admits. He admits, also, that Spirit here means "a power of the Spirit," which is what it means in the other passage. The spirit was not experienced because Jesus was not yet glorified, the author says, which implies that the Spirit did not come in power to the Disciples while he was with them as it came to them after he

left them. Its conscious operation was not fully realized till after his departure, we learn from the book of Acts. That was owing to reasons suggested by John 16:7, where Jesus is made to say, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you."

Why was it expedient for the Disciples that Jesus should leave them, when his personal presence seemed so necessary to them? And, if the Spirit of God was always here, how could he be made to say, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come." The translation comforter is inadequate. The word in Greek is *Paraclete*, which is printed in the margin of the New Revision; but it should have been placed in the text. It is sometimes rendered helper or aider, and each of these terms affords a preferable rendering. The Greek word signifies one summoned to our side or called to our aid. In a court of justice it denotes an advocate, but in religious experience it means one summoned to assist, and not to plead. The term might be translated standby, that is, one who or that which can be with us everywhere, aiding us on all occasions and helping us in all circumstances.

Now we may understand why Jesus was made to speak as this passage represents him. While he was with his Disciples, they looked to him and relied on him in times of urgent need. Had he remained with them, that would have continued to be the case. So long as he was with them, they were unable to act

for themselves in reliance upon God, or to walk alone by depending on him for help. When he was gone, however, they were compelled to look to God for assistance and trust in him with confidence. It was expedient for them that Jesus should go away, therefore, in order that they might realize personally the operation of the Spirit and experience personally its stimulating and supporting power.

In chapter 14:17 the Paraclete is called "the Spirit of truth," which is described as given to believers to be in them and abide with them. It was called the Spirit of truth because, as chapter 16:13 says, it should guide them into "all the truth," especially all the truth relating to Jesus and the Gospel; for the next verse adds, "He shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you." That is its office or function, as is further shown in chapter 14:26, where Jesus is made to say, "The Paraclete, even the holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you," meaning it would bring back to their minds and home to their hearts what Jesus had taught them, and give them a better understanding of its full significance.

Another description of the office of the Paraclete is found in chapter 15:26: "When the Paraclete is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness of me." In this passage Jesus is represented as saying that he would send the Paraclete, while in the previous passage

he says that the Father would send him. Here is an apparent, but not an actual, contradiction. These are only two ways of making Jesus speak. In other words, they are only two forms of speech that express the same thought, namely, that the departure of Jesus made it possible for his Disciples to experience the power of the Spirit in a new and special manner. But whatever was experienced was owing to the presence and activity of God.

From the last passage the *filioque* clause, "and the Son," in the Creed of Constantinople was derived, but without any rational or Scriptural warrant, because the procession mentioned in this passage refers to the mission or office of the Spirit, and not to its nature. Commenting on this passage in connection with the previous one, Dr. Plummer rightly remarks, "If the Paraclete is sent by the Son from the Father, and by the Father in the Son's name and at the Son's request, then the Paraclete proceedeth from the Father. If this be correct, then this statement refers to the office, and not to the person, of the holy Spirit, and has no bearing either way on the great question between the Eastern and Western Churches, the *filioque* (clause) added in the West to the Nicene Creed."

No reference is here made to the personality of the Spirit, nor does such a reference occur anywhere else. Neither is the Spirit anywhere regarded as a separate object of faith. The word for spirit is neuter, as explained at the beginning of this chapter, and the Spirit is mentioned impersonally in every

place. Why, then, does the Evangelist use the pronoun *he* in speaking of it? Because Paraclete is a masculine noun in Greek. The pronoun translated *he* is what is called the remote demonstrative, meaning that one—that person or that thing—as the case may be. The Paraclete is the Spirit of God bearing witness to the things that Jesus said and did. In other words, as chapter 14:26 tells us, it is the holy Spirit operating on what Jesus said and did, or God himself mediated through his life and teaching. Someone has said that the holy Spirit is our Lord's successor, but that statement is only partly correct. The Spirit of God was always here, and was the predecessor and accompanier of Jesus as truly as it is his successor. It was the Spirit of God that made him the being he was, and that gives his teaching the efficacy it has.

New Testament writers view the Spirit exactly as Old Testament writers viewed it. The Christian conception is the same as the Jewish, so far as its realization in consciousness is concerned, though it is somewhat more developed in the New than in the Old Testament with respect to personal experience. In both Testaments it is described as given, as grieved, as sent, as received, as poured out, and as experienced in the heart. In both Testaments, too, it is regarded as a quickening or life-giving effluence; for I Samuel 16:13 describes the Spirit of Jehovah as coming down upon David, and Matthew 3:16 describes the Spirit of God as descending upon Jesus. With the exception of grieve, which is em-

ployed figuratively in the sense of resist or repress, none of these terms could be used of a person. A person is not given nor received, nor does a person come down or descend from God; neither is a person sent forth or poured out by him, when the Spirit of God comes upon us and takes possession of us, but something of God himself is bestowed in every case.

As stated in the preceding paragraph, the doctrine of the Spirit is more developed with respect to personal experience in the New than in the Old Testament, the latter referring more frequently to its operation in nature, and the former almost exclusively to its operation in consciousness. In Psalm 51:9-12, which is a prayer for the exiled nation, the psalmist supplicates pardon and purity, restoration and support, through the renewing agency of the holy Spirit; and in Isaiah 32:16 the Spirit is described as the power by which the will of God is made to prevail in society. But by New Testament writers it is generally described as the power by which his will is done by individuals through the imparting of new life to the soul. They represent it as divine energy that quickens the mind and changes the nature and sanctifies the life, for by them the work of regeneration is not regarded as complete until it ends in sanctification.

When dealing with the Pauline benediction, Webster and Wilkinson, who are representative of traditional theologians, assert: "The combination and distinctions of this benediction can be satisfactorily

explained only by the doctrine of the Trinity. The association of the Lord Jesus Christ and the holy Spirit in the dispensation of blessings is unaccountable, except on the principle of perfect equality, and of identity of nature." That assertion, however, is untrue.

The combination and distinctions can be completely explained without any reference to the doctrine of the Trinity; for, as previously shown, there was no thought of that doctrine in the Apostle's mind when the Epistle was composed. And the association of Christ and the holy Spirit in the dispensation of the blessings mentioned is quite accountable without respect to the principle of perfect equality, and of identity of nature, because there is no suggestion of equality, or of identity of nature, in the passage. The equality of Christ and the holy Spirit, and their identity of nature, are not taught in the New Testament.

The benediction is a prayer to be experienced, not a doctrine to be believed. Those scholars recognize that it is a prayer, but assert that it is "a prayer in which each blessing is asked of its appropriate author and giver." But this assertion is as untrue as the other is. Paul does not invoke a blessing from Christ and a blessing from God and a blessing from the holy Spirit, as if addressing three persons. The whole prayer is addressed to God, who is the giver of all good, and who has just been mentioned as the author of "love and peace."

Christ is here named first, partly because Paul taught that grace and blessing come from God through him, as in I Corinthians 1:4 and Ephesians 1:3; and partly because he was in the habit of using the short form of benediction—"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you"—or "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you"—as in I Thessalonians 5:28, II Thessalonians 3:18, I Corinthians 16:23, Romans 16:20, Philippians 4:23.

The same two scholars add that, "even if the passage could be understood without accepting the doctrine of the Trinity, it teaches the distinct personality of the holy Spirit." But that statement is as false as is each of the other two. The distinct personality of the holy Spirit is not taught in any part of the Bible, neither in the Pauline benediction nor in the baptismal formula. That is a demonstrable fact. The benediction expresses a trinity of petitions, but does not suppose a trinity of persons; and the formula supposes not a trinity of persons, but a trinity of attributes. The idea of three persons in the Divine Being is as unscriptural as it is inconceivable to the modern mind.

Person in this connection is admittedly an inadequate term, because it implies distinct individuality, or complete separation from others. John Wesley was wise above most of his contemporaries when, in his sermon on the subject, he declared, "I dare not insist upon any one's using the word Trinity or Person"; and in the same paragraph he confesses, "I scruple using the words Trinity and Per-

sons, because I do not find those terms in the Bible." He might have added, because they are inappropriate, and inconsistent with both Old and New Testament thought.

No being can have more than one person, as we now use the word. But in the *Institutes* of Justinian we are told that, when that code was prepared, the word was used not only for the being that had the capacity of enjoying rights and performing duties, but also for the different characters or parts in which this capacity might show itself; so that the same man might be a person as a father, a person as a tutor, and a person as a husband.⁷ Because the personal distinctions in the Trinity must be explained consistently with essential unity, perhaps some such view of person was held by those who made the so-called Athanasian Creed.

The doctrine of three persons in one God has no basis in the Bible, however, but is based upon a foreign philosophy that rests upon a wrong interpretation of the Scriptures. Owing to dogmatic teaching on the subject since the construction of the Creeds, millions of good-living people have been prejudiced or repelled by the doctrine, and multitudes of thoughtful Christians are still confused with respect to it.

They can distinguish between God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, because the former represents the Infinite Being and the latter represents the spirit of a finite being; but they cannot dis-

⁷ Liber I, pp. 13, 14, English translation.

tinguish between God and the holy Spirit. That is something they feel themselves unable to do. And we should not wonder, perhaps, that such should be the case, because the distinction is one the modern mind would not have made.

What has hitherto been said, however, should enable every reader to perceive the difference that appears in the Scriptures and to understand the distinction that is made by the Biblical writers. They all view it as an emanation from God, or that in him which accomplishes his purpose and produces positive results for him. Hence they describe it as working or operating, as quickening and begetting, as creating and renewing, as helping and comforting. It has sometimes been defined as God in action, but that definition is defective, because he is always in action; and God acting or the holy Spirit acting is the same thing.

While all the writers view the holy Spirit in substantially the same way, the Lord Jesus Christ is viewed by the Apostles in a peculiar way. They view him as the element in which God reconciles men to himself, or the medium through which he bestows spiritual blessings and communicates divine grace. Examples of what is meant are found in II Corinthians 5:19: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself"; and in Romans 8:1, 2: "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death."

In II Corinthians 3:6 the Gospel is denominated the spirit in opposition to the letter, to denote what it is in its essence, and to indicate what it is in its origin, in that it was preached by men endowed with the divine Spirit; and in verse 17 the Lord Jesus Christ is called the Spirit mentioned in verse 6, because he was regarded by the Apostle as the very substance of the Gospel, and as being spiritually present in the proclamation and reception of it.

An example of Paul's distinction between God and the holy Spirit, and between the holy Spirit and Christ, occurs in I Corinthians 2:10. Speaking of the things that God prepared for them that love him, the Apostle says, "Unto us (those possessed of the spirit of Jesus) God revealed them through the Spirit (that is, the holy Spirit, the divine mode of operation)." Though not always expressly stated, that distinction is always implied. God is regarded by all the Apostles as the author of everything good; the holy Spirit is regarded as the agency by which he works; and the Lord Jesus Christ, as the medium through which spiritual blessings are consciously received, or the element in which the divine favor is consciously enjoyed.

In his book entitled *The First Age of Christianity*, Professor E. F. Scott says, "Paul's doctrine of the Spirit continually merges in his doctrine of union with Christ. Often, indeed, he speaks of the Spirit as if it were identical with the indwelling Christ."^{*} It is only in experience, however, that Paul seems

^{*} P. 203.

to speak in that way; and his reason for so speaking is obvious. In experience the result is the same whether we say we have God dwelling in us, or Christ dwelling in us, or the holy Spirit dwelling in us, because in each case the Spirit is the same in kind.

The light of the moon is the same in kind as the light of the sun, because the moon derives her light from the sun; so that we have something of the sun in each case, and the same consciousness of light. In like manner, all good things—life, light, and love—come from God; and it makes no difference in consciousness whether we think of them as proceeding immediately from him, or mediately through Christ by the agency of the holy Spirit. When we have his Spirit, we have a part of himself; when we have the spirit of Jesus, we have the divine Spirit to that extent.

Hence the present writer would prefer to say that Paul speaks of the holy Spirit as if it were equivalent in effect to the indwelling Christ, because, though unified in experience, they are never actually identified. The distinction all the Apostles made is well illustrated by Romans 8:10: "If Christ (the spirit of Jesus) is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit (the human spirit) is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you (that is, the holy Spirit), he (God) that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also

your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

From this passage it is plain that Christ dwelling in us or the holy Spirit dwelling in us is regarded as having the same effect upon us, or as producing the same result in us; but it is just as plain that God is regarded as the author of the process, that Christ is regarded as the element in which our nature is regenerated, and that the holy Spirit is regarded as the agency through which the regeneration is effected and through which our bodies are to be quickened.

So, recognizing the Apostolic distinction, the author of the Fourth Gospel could consistently make Jesus say in chapter 14:18, "I am coming to you," meaning the Spirit of truth, mentioned in the preceding verse, whom the Father would give; and in verse 23, "We will come unto him," meaning a coming in association with the Father, because of the unity of the Father and the Son; and in chapter 16:13, "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth," meaning the Paraclete, which is called the holy Spirit in chapter 14:26, that is, the holy Spirit mediated through the life and teaching of Jesus, as previously explained.

We may now see how the doctrine of the Trinity as set forth in the Creed differs from the simple teaching of the New Testament. Athanasius taught that there are three persons—the Father, the Son, and the holy Spirit—in one divinity; and declared that "the Father is God, the Son is God, and the

holy Spirit is God." But the Scriptures teach that the Father alone is God, that the Son is that in him which he sent forth to manifest his character and reveal his truth, and that the holy Spirit is that in him by which he acts or operates in both the realm of matter and the realm of mind.

Therefore, we should think not of three persons in one God, but of his three essential attributes—Light, Love and Life; and the Pauline benediction suggests by "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ" revealing light, by "the love of God" redeeming love, and by "the communion of the holy Spirit" regenerating life. As realized in human character, these three attributes suggest Christlike grace, benevolent love, and spiritual life.

CHAPTER XIII

THE ALL-SUFFICIENCY

By the all-sufficiency of Jesus is meant the sufficiency of his teaching to instruct all who accept it in matters pertaining to religion and the sufficiency of his spirit to inspire all who receive it with eternal life. That statement presupposes that his teaching is accepted and his spirit received with a determination to practice the one and to manifest the other in daily life and conduct.

Because his spirit represents both what he was and what he wishes us to be, the title of this chapter may be understood as meaning the sufficiency of the Christ-spirit for the guidance and government of men in all their relations with one another and with God. Accompanied with his sanctifying power, the Christ-spirit is sufficient to regenerate all individuals, to reconstruct all communities, to reconstitute all nations or states, and to reorganize the world.

In the first place, it is sufficient to regenerate all individuals. Whether they realize it or not, all men need to be regenerated, or renewed spiritually by the power of God. That declaration may require an

explanation. Every man is limited in knowledge, as well as in power, and on that account is liable to err. By reason of his limitations and his liability to go astray, he should recognize his dependence upon the Divine Being and walk humbly before him. To adapt a sentence from Robertson of Brighton, the one thought that we may err is enough of itself to keep a man humble.¹

But every man is not simply liable to err; every man has erred at some time or in some way, and most men have erred at many times and in many ways. Because of those facts the Apostle could declare that "all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God." All men are conscious of having failed to display his glory as they should, by not being all they might have been and by not doing all they should have done. That thought should make them regretful, as well as keep them humble.

There are some, no doubt, and there may be many, who believe with Sir Oliver Lodge that "the higher man of to-day is not worrying about his sins." The higher man does not need to worry about his sins, because he tries to keep from transgressing moral law by obeying the voice of conscience, which is the voice of God within us telling us to do right. But conscience is a safe guide only as it is enlightened, and no one can obey its voice completely without being quickened and assisted by the power of God. The steady ascent of man is possible only through the possession of the Christ-spirit.

¹ Sermon XXI, p. 233, new edition, 1875.

Besides the liability to err, there are proclivities to evil as well as good in human nature, tendencies that lead downward as well as upward; and in many men the proclivity to evil is stronger than the inclination to good. That thought also should make and keep men dependent on a power higher than human, for only a will quickened into activity and reinforced by the divine Spirit can overcome this proneness to err and to commit sin. In other words, a moral change of nature, which amounts to a new birth, is necessary to lead them to look constantly for divine assistance. Men must be born of the Spirit, as the Gospel teaches, or be transformed by the renewing of the mind, as the Apostle says; that is, they must be renewed in the center of their being, if they are to become possessed of the spirit of Christ.

But the possession of that spirit, through the power of divine grace, can enable all men to subdue their proclivities to what is bad or base, no matter how low they have fallen or how long they have strayed. No one is too foul to be purified or too wicked to be freed from sin. The truth of that statement has been demonstrated in countless instances during the nineteen centuries of Christianity. Experience proves, as the parable of the Prodigal implies, that no one can sink so low or wander so far that he cannot be reclaimed, if he is willing to receive that spirit and able to appropriate it; for it has transformed the character of all sorts

of sinners, and will continue to do so while the world endures.

In the second place, the Christ-spirit is sufficient to reconstruct all communities. Owing to human limitation, men develop imperfect characters; owing to human imperfection, they acquire bad habits and commit evil deeds. Such men introduce into society customs and practices that are vicious, and that corrupt the community in which they live. So there are social customs to be abolished as well as individual citizens to be regenerated.

While the regeneration of the individual is of prime importance, because society is composed of individuals, the regeneration of his environment is almost equally important; for, though corporate salvation can fully come only through individual salvation, if his environment is unhealthy physically and morally, the individual cannot long continue sound in body or in soul. Good individuals are necessary to make the surroundings right, and good surroundings are necessary to keep the individuals right. Individualism and collectivism are like the two parts of a sphere, the one being as necessary as the other, so far as the well-being of the community is concerned.

We cannot expect a reformed drunkard to conquer his love of liquor, if left in a bar-room; nor can we expect a reclaimed libertine to keep himself pure, if allowed to live in a slum. No more can we expect a converted gambler to overcome his habit of playing for stakes, if permitted to frequent a gambling re-

sort. Such men must be taken from their surroundings or their surroundings must be changed. As an infected dwelling must be fumigated or a malarial district must be drained to guard men from disease, so a debauched neighborhood must be purged to keep them from criminality and vice.

Only the Christ-spirit can effect that change in every community, and it is the duty of the Church through the efforts of her membership to bring that change about. Hitherto, for the most part, that has not been regarded as her duty, her leaders having considered the regeneration of individuals to be her principal work. Until quite recently a too narrow view was held of her mission by professing Christians, and a too restricted use was made by them of the principles of the Gospel, for these have a collective as well as an individual application. Because Jesus did not deal with social conditions, they thought the Church should not do so; but that was a mistaken view. He did not interfere with the social order in his day because the time was not ripe and the circumstances were not favorable, but he uttered precepts whose underlying principles were calculated to revolutionize society.

Now, however, the time is ripe and the circumstances are favorable, and Christian people should no longer ignore the social and moral condition of those around them. The exhortation to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness implies that we should not only enter the kingdom by becoming his subjects, but also extend the kingdom by

making righteousness regnant in society. The command to love our neighbor as ourself implies that we should not simply seek to ameliorate his condition, but help to make it as healthy and as happy as our own. And the Golden Rule has a similar implication.

Many Christians feel responsible for the well-being of society, and are doing what they can for their immediate neighborhood; but the great majority do not feel their responsibility as strongly as they should, and are doing little or nothing for the betterment of those about them. In all large communities there are social wrongs to be righted, social inequalities to be adjusted, and social grievances to be redressed. These are clamant evils that must be removed before the will of God can be made to prevail in society.

Every large community needs to be reconstructed, if the people who compose it are to advance in health and happiness. The poor should be better housed, better clad, and better fed; and their surroundings should be greatly improved both morally and physically. Intemperance, immorality, gambling, and poverty—all those should, so far as possible, be abolished. All dens of vice should be driven out and all dirty slums should be cleared away. And if the principles of the Gospel be applied by professing Christians with the Christ-spirit, there is no district in any community so degraded or debauched that it cannot be transformed.

In the third place, the Christ-spirit is sufficient to reconstitute all nations or states. As imperfect men become our legislators, they enact imperfect laws, laws that are unfair in their operation; for some of them not only permit the practice of selfishness and greed, but also enable the strong to oppress the weak and the rich to exploit the poor. All such laws should be repealed or nullified.

Even laws that were meant to be just when they were made, having been fairly suitable for that age, become unsuitable for a later age; and the longer they remain upon the statute book, the more inequitable in their working they prove to be. Those laws should be abrogated, because they have produced injustices, such as class distinctions, class privileges, and class prerogatives, which prevent the true prosperity of the nation as a whole.

Many vested rights are vested wrongs, and many hereditary privileges are hereditary iniquities. These are preventable injustices, though some of them are the accumulation of centuries of abuse. It is a reproach to a nation when its people are divided into classes and masses, or into a privileged and an unprivileged class. There should be freedom and equality for all citizens, whatever their station or their occupation may be.

Men are not born free and equal, except before God and the law; but all men are entitled to equal rights and privileges, so far as they are able to claim their rights and exercise their privileges; in other words, they are entitled to equal opportunity, oppor-

tunity for both progress and development, no less than to equal justice; and every government should provide for the freedom and equality of all its people in each of those respects, and make them available as far as practicable to rich and poor alike.

To do this properly all great states need to be reconstituted, as all large communities need to be reconstructed; for in every such state there are constitutional changes that should be made, that is, antiquated systems to be abandoned, and national reforms to be effected, before equal rights and privileges can be enjoyed by all its citizens to the full extent. In every such state, too, there are economic problems to be solved, and industrial abuses to be remedied, before the relations between capital and labor are equitably adjusted. Grasping companies are still operating and greedy individuals are still profiteering with the result that discontented workers in many countries are complaining of injustice.

So long as those conditions exist, a nation cannot prosper as it should, because the material prosperity of a country depends on the unity and harmony of its parts and the comfort and contentment of its people, as its spiritual prosperity depends on the healthiness of their habits and the righteousness of their lives. Answering the question, What constitutes a state? Sir William Jones in his well-known ode has said, "Men, high-minded men; men who their duties know, but know their rights, and know-

ing, dare maintain." That answer is as true to-day as it was a century and a half ago.

Until those problems are solved and those abuses remedied, we cannot have a nation whose citizens are contented and happy; for if men do not get their rights by fair means, they may seek to obtain them by force, and there is always danger that discontented citizens will resort to force. Only equitable governments can prevent such a calamity by enacting righteous laws, for as long as unrighteous laws remain, unrighteous practices will continue.

Experience proves that even members of the Church will allow themselves to do what is legally right, though it may be morally wrong. So far as the law permits, many people will charge as exorbitant prices and exact as extortionate rates as though they were ignorant of the Gospel; and many others will rent old houses unfit for habitation, and sometimes in unhealthy districts, as readily as if they had not heard of the Golden Rule. Acts that are highly improper morally are often condoned by religious people because they are permitted by the law. Making men professing Christians does not always make them praiseworthy citizens.

To keep in check those who will do anything that is legal, however inequitable, laws should be enacted that will not permit selfish men to take unfair advantage of their fellows. All legislation should be impartial to save some persons from their selfishness, and some legislation should be prohibitory to save others from themselves. The necessity for

legislation of both kinds is becoming more manifest every year, and those who accept and practice the Gospel are responsible for getting both kinds of legislation passed by parliament.

Many who do not belong to any Church are now avowing their belief that the Gospel of Christ is the final truth concerning the relations of human beings with one another. In the winter of 1926 some outstanding members of the British Labor Party issued a manifesto, perhaps the most remarkable ever issued by such a group of men, declaring that "Jesus gave us the fundamental principles for the governance of our individual lives and the ordering of our social relationships which alone can produce a peaceable, humane and stable society."

These Labor leaders went still further in their public declaration. Recognizing that the teaching of Jesus must be consistently applied to produce the results desired, they said, "It is our conviction that statesmen will fail and political programmes will prove futile as a solvent of social trouble, unless they embody the spirit and practice of Christ." The principles of the Gospel must be applied to relationships of every kind with the spirit of Christ, as these men say; but, so applied, they are sufficient for the solution of all problems economic or industrial, and for the settlement of all questions social or political.

While those problems are being solved and those questions settled, the application of these principles with the Christ-spirit will improve the relations be-

tween capital and labor; it will guarantee a fair day's wage for a fair day's work, afford industrial laborers ample leisure for rest and recreation, and secure to workingmen of every class a larger proportion of the profits they produce. It will also humanize the conditions under which men work, and revolutionize the surroundings in which they live; and, till poverty is abolished and the gulf between the rich and the poor is bridged, it will make better provision for assisting the needy, for comforting the afflicted, and for relieving the destitute and distressed.

A thorough application of these principles will do more. It will democratize all governments, so that they will adopt policies that make for the unity and prosperity of the whole country; legislate for the well-being of the many, not for the benefit of the few; plan for the greatest good of the greatest number, and work for the commonweal of the commonwealth, thus rendering it impossible for the rich to exploit the poor or for the strong to oppress the weak.

Such an application of these principles will do more still. It will destroy the desire to exploit and oppress, and will enable all men to obtain their rights; it will make the people of each country feel that they are members one of another, and will create a desire on the part of those who are more favored for those who are less favored to have as good a chance to get on in the world as they themselves

have had, because their motto, or rule of action, will be, "All for each and each for all."

In the fourth place, the Christ-spirit is sufficient to reorganize the world. The world needs to be reorganized, no less than nations need to be reconstituted, or communities reconstructed, or individuals regenerated; and it is a sad reflection that, only since the Pan-Germanic War, have statesmen given much attention to international relationships with a view to good-will and fair-play on the part of every nation toward all other nations.

It is a sorrowful fact, too, that after nineteen centuries of Christianity, there is no nation that observes the Sermon on the Mount, and no national government that regards the Golden Rule. There are individuals that practice the precepts of the Gospel, and some small communities that apply its principles in their relations with one another; but, as yet, we have no truly Christian nation and no really Christian government. A truly Christian nation would not permit its government to do a dishonorable thing.

Quite naturally, nations are as greedy and governments as grasping as individuals are; and most great nations and strong governments are seeking by might or by craft to obtain more power or dominion all the time, overlooking or ignoring the fact that the moral law was meant for peoples as well as persons, and that its observance is no less important for the prosperity of a nation than for that of an individual. Hence we must convert the souls

of governments as well as change the hearts of citizens.

Great nations have always coveted something another has had, and their covetousness has tended to estrange them; but, speaking generally, there are three things at present that help to keep them from being friends, namely, economic rivalry, commercial supremacy, and territorial expansion. All these are fruitful sources of estrangement to-day, though in the past the last has been the worst of all.

More wars have arisen over the acquisition of territory than from any other cause, if not from all other causes combined. As Alexander Hamilton observed a century and a quarter ago, "Territorial disputes have at all times been found one of the most fertile sources of hostilities among nations. Perhaps the greatest portion of wars that have desolated the earth has sprung from that origin."²

Commercial supremacy also is a cause of conflict, as well as estrangement. Though not so ancient nor so frequent a cause as the other, some devastating wars have been waged with a view to the extension of trade. This was a powerful factor in bringing about the recent European struggle, the causes that led to it having been partly territorial and partly commercial. Therefore, unless something is done to curb this desire for supremacy, it might again imperil the peace of Europe.

Economic rivalry has not yet caused a bloody conflict, perhaps, but it is causing a bloodless struggle,

² *The Federalist*, No. VII.

for it has brought about a clash of interests that might easily lead to a clash of arms. There is rivalry in obtaining raw materials, in manufacturing finished products, and in procuring markets for them. A measure of competition may be a good thing, because it may have a laudable object; but rivalry always has a selfish object, and is often unscrupulous in the choice of means.

The folly and futility of war as a means of settling disputes are now recognized by the best men in all countries, as it always results in misery, suffering, and loss. Just a few years since Dr. Stresemann, then premier of Germany, repudiated it as a method for redressing the alleged grievances of his own country. And the destructiveness of the recent struggle in Europe has led many to declare that civilization must end war or war will end civilization. But that declaration is scarcely true. Nothing can destroy civilization of some kind, but the question is whether our civilization in its present form is worth preserving. A civilization that permits aggressive warfare is certainly not a Christian one, because aggressive warfare is a species of savagery. It rests upon the brutal doctrine that might makes right—the bad old rule that “They should take who have the power and they should keep who can.”

In the judgment of the present writer our boasted civilization should be terminated and be replaced by a better one. He believes we should substitute one that is moral in all it permits, as well as in all it

practices. He approves the noble utterance of Premier Herriot made at Geneva some years ago: "We must make what is right mighty, and what is mighty right." Wisdom says we should, reason says we can, and Christianity says we must; for only a civilization that assures peace by rendering aggressive war impossible can properly be called Christian.

Then the world should be reorganized, secondly, for the sake of good-will. If peace on earth were assured at once, we could not have a spirit of comity among the nations till we get rid of jealousy and rivalry, for jealousy is a hateful feeling and rivalry is a harmful motive. Both the feeling and the motive are unworthy of human beings, and no less of nations than of individuals. So long as nations are jealous or rivalrous in regard to one another, there will be more or less antagonism among them; and while there is antagonism, their relations cannot be satisfactory, much less cordial, because a measure of distrust and dislike will be felt.

Before there can be cordial feelings between persons there must be confidence in each other and respect for each other's rights, and the same is the case with regard to nations. Good-will alone can inspire confidence and beget respect for rights. Hence good-will is as necessary to the welfare of the world as peace, because it is a fundamental condition of peace, being the only sure guaranty of peace.

Nations, like individuals, are members one of another, and the solidarity of the race suggests that

they need one another. Each has something another can use, and each can use to its advantage something another has. By reason of their interdependence, they cannot prosper to the fullest extent without one another; and the wisest statesmen know that the success of one does not depend on the injury of another. On the contrary, as in the human body, if one member suffers, all the members suffer more or less; and if one member prospers, all the other members share in its prosperity. Viewing humanity as a living organism, we shall see that the prosperity of one people may help to contribute to that of all peoples in some way.

Besides the causes of estrangement and dislike already mentioned, there are others which not only keep nations apart, but also prevent them from having a friendly feeling for one another. If the feeling of unfriendliness which is steadily increasing in some quarters should become intense, it might result in a struggle on the part of the inhabitants of several countries for freedom or for fair play, or for both.

One of the causes of the unfriendliness that now exists is the attitude of ruling nations to subject nations, which is often arrogant and overbearing. Even where it is not positively offensive, the conduct of the rulers shows that they regard those under them as a subjugated people and make them feel their subjugated condition in ways that are humiliating. This feeling of subjugation is all the more galling when the subject nation has within it

as great men as the ruling nation has, and behind it a much greater history.

Finding themselves exploited and feeling themselves subjugated, such people naturally desire to be free. But, when they ask to be allowed to govern themselves, they are told that they are not ready for self-government, though they might have long since been ready, had their rulers tried to get them ready. While they are gradually receiving a larger measure of self-rule, they are restless and dissatisfied because of the slow fulfilment of their desire. If the granting of their wishes be indefinitely delayed, they may be compelled to conquer their independence.

Another cause of estrangement and dislike is the behavior of progressive nations toward backward races. At different times and in various ways Western nations have dealt unfairly with Eastern nations. They have taken territory from them which they had no moral right to take, and have compelled them to make treaties that should not have been ratified, and grant concessions that would not have been yielded without compulsion, for some concessions have been extorted by force of arms. One recalls with pain and shame instances of such unfairness, but they are so well known that it is unnecessary here to mention them.

When the weaker nations request to be freed from unjust obligations, sometimes their request is either refused or its consideration is delayed till trouble takes place. China, for example, which has been

the victim of much injustice, requested some years ago the cancellation of unequal treaties and unfair agreements that were wrung from a dynasty which has since been overthrown. Little attention was paid to her request, however, till after several riots had occurred and much loss of property had ensued. We cannot expect good-will to obtain among the nations while old wrongs remain unrighted and old grievances unredressed.

Still another cause of estrangement and dislike is the treatment of the colored races by the white race, and especially the unfair treatment of the blacks by the whites. In South Africa for some time there has been before the legislature a Color-bar Bill which proposes to segregate the blacks and prevent them from enjoying equal advantages with the whites. For a good while the latter have tried to keep the former from learning to do skilled labor, and to restrict them to the performance of unskilled work, that is, to deny them political rights and deprive them of economic privileges. But now they are enacting legislation to keep them from having an equal opportunity for progress and development in education and industry.

Such legislation is iniquitous, and all fair-minded persons must condemn it. One is glad to learn that it has been condemned by the best opinion in South Africa. Race prejudice is foolish, but race repression or preclusion is fiendish. The whites have no right to keep the blacks back, much less have they a right to hold them down. No man should be

denied the privilege of education and development, or precluded on the ground of color from reaching the highest attainment of which he is capable; but every man, irrespective of race or color, class or creed, should be allowed to realize himself as completely as he can, and be given a chance to get the most and best that is possible out of this life.

There are degrees of development, of course; and, as a rule, the whites have an advantage over the blacks in that respect. But superior development is not a proof of superior race, for true superiority is acquired, not bestowed. It consists in character, not in color; in behavior, not in race. Ill treatment of others is a mark of inferiority in both character and behavior, and is as unworthy as it is unchristian. There cannot be good-will on the part of the blacks toward the whites so long as they are unfairly treated by them.

To prevent estrangement and dislike the practices that cause them and the actions that encourage them must be abandoned. As the white nations are more to blame than the other nations are with respect to color prejudice and race superiority, each of which begets antipathy and antagonism, they should begin at once to set a better example and show a finer spirit, for color prejudice and race superiority are engendering feelings in the peoples of Asia and Africa that may lead to terrible reprisals in the years to come.

The League of Nations, which has accomplished considerable in determining boundaries and settling disputes, may do a great deal toward removing causes of irritation and alienation; but it is only partly formed as yet, and evidences of secret negotiations are said to have appeared in constituting it. If that be a fact, it is to be regretted, for secret negotiations in the League are no less reprehensible than secret alliances among the nations; and, as the nations should discontinue the practice of crafty diplomacy and clandestine intrigue, so the League should discountenance the very suggestion of anything underhand.

Until the League is rightly constituted, it cannot function properly; and it will not be constituted rightly, unless guided by the Christ-spirit; nor will it function properly, unless governed by that spirit. Governed by that spirit, however, it may be the means not only of determining national boundaries and settling national disputes, but also of preventing international discord and promoting international good-will. Governed by that spirit, indeed, it may become a mighty instrument for molding world opinion and maintaining world peace.

The League must be assisted and directed, however, by the Church, which is the institution ordained of God for extending his kingdom and saving the world. And more and more each year thoughtful persons are thinking, if not saying, with Keyserling, "If the world is to be saved, it must be by changing the hearts of men." That great work

will be accomplished, or chiefly performed, by Christian people. Hence Christians everywhere, by whatever name they are called, should bestir themselves to the performance of the task.

Notwithstanding its magnitude, the task is not too prodigious to be undertaken with confidence, or at least with good hope of success. As individuals are regenerated, they will become pure and peaceful; as communities are reconstructed, their members will become kind and considerate; as nations are reconstituted, their citizens will become just and generous; and as the world is reorganized, the nations will become fair and friendly in their relations one with another.

Many men have thought and said that, human nature being what it is, there will always be injustice and iniquity, violence and vice. And because human beings are finite and imperfect, some of these evils will, no doubt, continue, though on a gradually decreasing scale. In their grosser forms they have already been considerably reduced; and with the spread of the Gospel and the application of its principles, their number will become fewer and fewer and their influence less and less. Though the progress may be slow, society is gradually improving, and the world is getting better all the time. And the number of men of good-will is steadily increasing in all countries from year to year.

Thus the Christ-spirit, if possessed and manifested, is sufficient to regenerate all personal life, to reconstruct all social life, to reconstitute all national

life, and to reorganize the life of the world; for, as moral and social evils are overcome through the possession of that spirit, individuals and nations will not only draw nearer to one another, but also dwell in amity and work in harmony with one another.

Being a spirit of benevolence and brotherliness, in proportion as it takes possession of them it will make both men and nations recognize the solidarity of the race and the spiritual unity of mankind; it will impel them to acknowledge their kinship and realize their interdependence; it will lead them to see that, since all have the same Father, all belong to the same family; it will cause them to feel that, as all men are brethren, all should be regarded and treated as such.

In proportion as the Christ-spirit takes possession of men, it begets a new mentality in them; it delivers them from narrow nationalism and exclusive patriotism, and develops a broad internationalism, tolerant and sympathetic, which destroys the desire to oppress and exploit, or to injure and ill-treat. It does more than that. It creates a cosmopolitan view of the world that visualizes the needs of humanity, a view that not merely acknowledges human rights and liberties, but seeks to safeguard them by putting humanity above empire, proper dealing above power, and worthy conduct above wealth.

When men in general possess that spirit, they will bring about a world republic, or a world democracy, in which each person will be a citizen in a sense deeper than Plato ever contemplated or than Sir

Thomas More ever dreamed, because it will be a democracy of friendship and fellowship, peace and good-will. Then one nation will not hold another in subjection, nor govern another against its will; but all nations will be free to govern themselves as they choose.

The Christ-spirit, therefore, is the hope of humanity, and mankind can neither improve nor advance steadily without it. No other spirit can destroy envy and jealousy, or prevent rivalry and antagonism; nor can any other spirit eradicate error and vice. Neither is there any other spirit that can unite men and nations through the banishing of prejudices and the conciliating of differences, and through the gaining of one another's confidence and the winning of one another's regard.

It is the only spirit, in short, that can end strife and war by removing the causes that lead to them; or that can establish peace and good-will by producing the feelings that make for them; or that can insure fair and open dealing among both men and nations; or that can create a coöperative commonwealth and a coöperative world by impelling all good people to pray for the progress of one nation as earnestly as for that of another, and by inclining them to rejoice in the prosperity of every country as sincerely as in that of their own.



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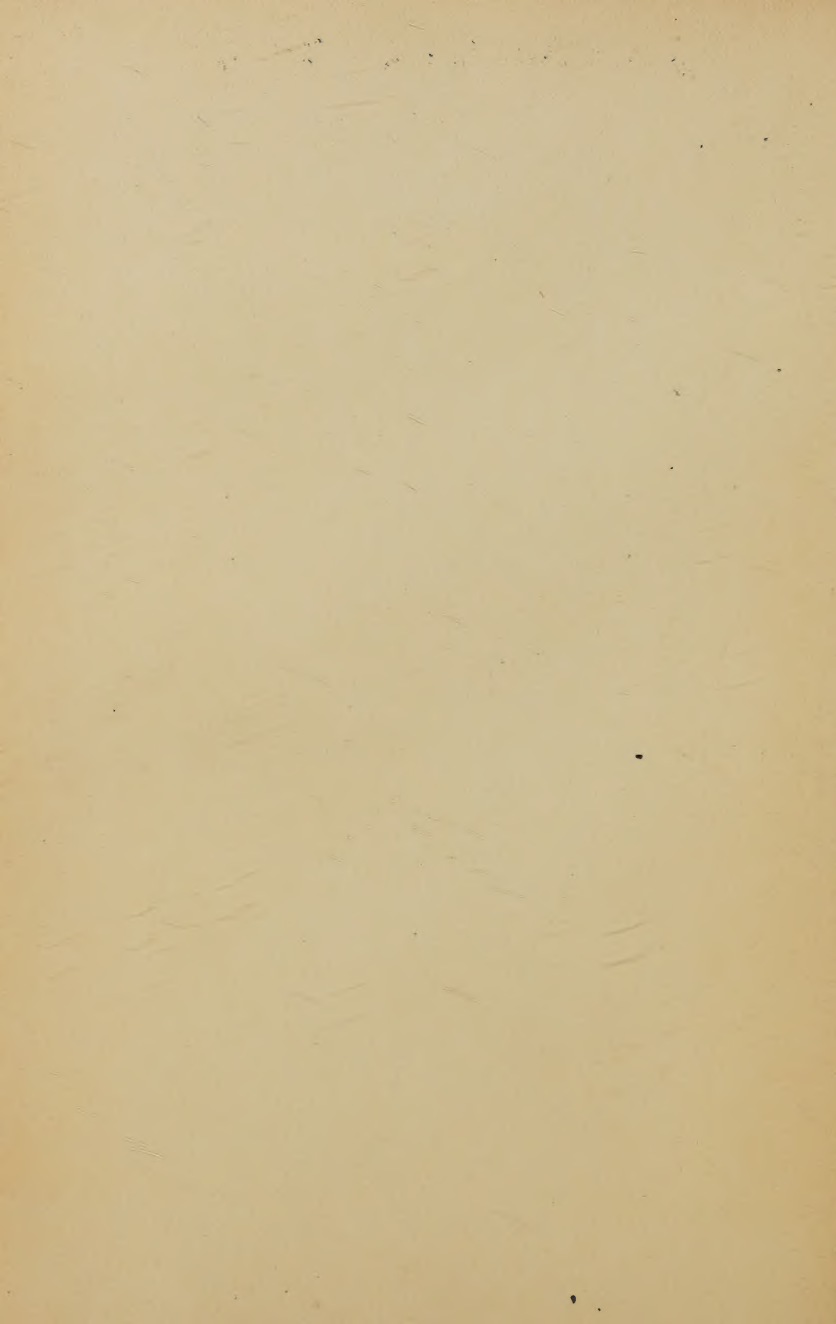
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